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Mick Jagger
relishes return
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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

Biden widens his lead

Former VP racks up
wins in 4 more states

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Democratic presidential
candidate and former Vice
President Joe Biden speaks
in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN
The Washington Post

Taliban POWs set for release before talks

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani agreed Wednesday to release Taliban prisoners so that peace talks can begin between the government and insurgent group.

The launch of intra-Afghan talks is a key precondition for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan. A phased withdrawal began this week and will be completed in 14 months if all sides fulfill commitments outlined in a deal signed by the U.S. and the Taliban on Feb. 29.

U.S. officials have expressed doubts that the Taliban will live up to its commitments under the deal and have repeatedly called on them to cut down on violence throughout the country.

Intra-Afghan talks were supposed to kick off Tuesday, but were delayed over a disagreement about the prisoner release. The U.S.-Taliban deal, which was reached without Kabul's participation, says up to 5,000 Taliban fighters should be released from government jails in exchange for up to 1,000 detainees held by the insurgents before talks begin.

SEE TALIBAN ON PAGE 4

Soldiers, family members 'in limbo' after Army halts moves amid virus

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — Maj. David Watkins and his wife, Irina, must be out of their apartment by next week and already have plane tickets to Fort Belvoir, Va., later this month.

But they're worried about more than inconveniences after the Army halted moves to new assign-

ments from South Korea and Italy over the next two months to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

"My husband has PTSD and has been having suicidal thoughts, and at the end of February we found out that he has a brain tumor as well," she said Tuesday.

"It's been so scary and stressful for the past six months that I can't even think about the option of not

being able to leave."

About 2,400 soldiers and family members in South Korea alone will be affected by the order, officials told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

Caught off-guard

The sudden decision, which was announced over the weekend and included Italy, caught commanders

off-guard and sparked major confusion as officials scrambled to work out the details.

"Frankly it came as a bit of a surprise to all of us," USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams said Wednesday during a question and answer session with the American Forces Network at Camp Humphreys.

SEE LIMBO ON PAGE 7

RELATED

Marines nix
exercise in
Norway over
virus fears

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Airlines slash flights, freeze hiring amid virus

By DAVID KOENIG
Associated Press

Airlines are slashing flights, freezing hiring and parking planes to cope with a stunning drop in bookings and a rise in cancellations caused by fear over the new virus outbreak.

Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly said that the outbreak might be worse for airlines than the terror attacks of 2001. An industry trade group believes that it will be more damaging.

Delta Air Lines said Tuesday that travel demand has fallen so much in the past week, it expects one-third of seats to be empty this month on flights within the United States, which was insulated from virus fallout for a time.

Airlines normally try to lure reluctant travelers by cutting fares, but that likely won't work with the COVID-19 outbreak.

"If you are scared of flying, you are probably scared at any price," said Delta President Glen Hauenstein.

Delta, the world's biggest airline by revenue, said that net bookings declined 25% to 30% in the past two weeks and could get worse. It will cut international flights by 20% to 25% and reduce U.S. flying by 10% to 15%, roughly matching cuts previously announced by United Airlines. Delta is also parking some planes, cutting spending, freezing hiring, offering voluntary unpaid leave, delaying voluntary pension contributions and suspending share buybacks.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		
Euro costs (March 12)	\$1.1631	Switzerland (Franc).....0.9335
Dollar buys (March 12)	60.8598	Thailand (Baht).....31.41
British pound (March 12)	\$1.32	Turkey (Lira).....6.1912
Japanese yen (March 12)	101.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)
South Korean won (March 12)	1,162.00	
Commercial rates		
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771	
British pound	\$1.2942	
Canada (Dollar)	1.3736	
China (Yuan)	6.9531	
Denmark (Krone)	6.5867	
Egypt (Pound)	15.7208	
Euro	\$1.1345/0.8815	
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7625	
Hungary (Forint)	295.77	
Israel (Shekel)	3.5477	
Japan (Yen)	104.62	
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3065	
Norway (Krone)	9.5939	
Philippines (Peso)	50.68	
Poland (Zloty)	3.81	
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7536	
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3885	
South Korea (Won)	1,188.50	

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.25
Discount rate	1.75
Federal funds market rate	1.09
3-month bill	0.43
30-year bond	1.23

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY

AFRICOM head cites ISIS, al-Qaida threat

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Islamic State and al-Qaida are “on the march” in western Africa, where international efforts to counter extremists groups are insufficient, the head of U.S. Africa Command said Tuesday.

Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee, Gen. Stephen Townsend warned that militant groups operating in Africa’s Sahel region, which includes Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, could extend their reach to coastal states.

“If we don’t turn this around in West Africa, I think it becomes a growing threat in the region,” Townsend said.

Al-Qaida and ISIS affiliates in West Africa are now coordinating efforts in some cases, which is unusual for terrorist groups that are generally rivals, Townsend said. “I can’t really explain that (cooperation),” he



Gen. Stephen Townsend testifies during a House Armed Services Committee hearing in Washington on Tuesday.

said, “I think it is a local phenomenon.”

Concern about the growing power of militants in Africa comes as the Pentagon reviews the AFRICOM mission and whether troop cutbacks are needed to focus assets

in other areas such as the Pacific.

Townsend described the current U.S. force level in Africa as “a bargain for the American taxpayer.”

“A few troops and a few bucks go a long way in Africa,” he said.

But Townsend stopped short of calling for more American forces to counter ISIS and al-Qaida-linked groups in West Africa, where European militaries — the French in particular — are in the lead.

“Europe can and should do more before America does more,” said Townsend, adding that problems with instability in West Africa will be felt in Europe before the U.S.

The main problem now, he said, is “uncoordinated” efforts between various militaries involved in the fight in the Sahel.

Since 2018, violence caused by militant groups has surged by 250% in Burkina Faso, Mali and western Niger, the Pentagon’s Inspector General said in a report

last month.

The U.S. during the past two years has scaled back some missions in the region because of previous cutbacks. As a result, AFRICOM’s strategy of “degrading” extremist groups in the west of the continent has shifted to “containing,” the IG said.

There are about 6,000 American military personnel in Africa at any given time. Most of the troops are concentrated in the East African country of Djibouti, where the U.S. has its main operational base on the continent, and neighboring Somalia where troops are helping local forces battle the al-Shabab extremist group.

Townsend said he is satisfied with the number of troops and assets he has in Africa.

“Today, I think AFRICOM is adequately resourced to do what we are told to do,” he said.

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Pair of Russian aircraft are intercepted off Alaska’s coast

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — American and Canadian fighter jets intercepted a pair of Russian reconnaissance planes in international airspace about 50 nautical miles off Alaska’s coast on Monday, the North American Aerospace Defense Command announced Tuesday.

American F-22 and Canadian CF-18 fighter jets intercepted the two Tu-142 Bear maritime reconnaissance turboprop aircraft over the Beaufort Sea north of Alaska, NORAD said. The Russian planes were intercepted after entering the Alaskan Air Defense Identification Zone, which extends roughly 200 miles from Alaska’s coast.

U.S. and Canadian aviation officials expect any aircraft entering their defense zones to identify themselves in the interest of national security.

NORAD said the Russian aircraft remained within the Alaskan Air Defense Identification Zone for about four hours and they were escorted the entire time. The planes never entered American or Canadian sovereign territory, which extends 12 nautical miles out from the nations’ coasts.

The fighters were supported Monday by an American KC-135 airborne fuel tanker and an E-3 Sentry AWACS radar and surveillance plane.

Intercepts of Russian aircraft off the coast of the United States and Canada, especially near Alaska, are a relatively common occurrence. Russian aircraft routinely fly into that area on training or surveillance missions. Last year, NORAD intercepted nuclear-capable Russian bombers in the area on several occasions without incident.

U.S. defense officials have said they expect more such incidents as Russia and



North American Aerospace Defense Command

North American Aerospace Defense Command F-22s and CF-18s intercepted two Russian aircraft entering the Alaskan Air Defense Identification Zone on Monday.

other nations commit more military assets to the Arctic region.

Air Force Gen. Terrence J. O’Shaughnessy, the chief of NORAD, told the Senate Armed Services Committee last month that the United States “had no

choice” but to improve its homeland defense posture in Alaska as Russia bolsters its posture in the Arctic.

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ACX Crystal lawyers seek dismissal of USS Fitzgerald collision case

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Lawyers for the shipping company whose chartered vessel collided with the USS Fitzgerald in 2017 asked a U.S. district judge last week to dismiss two lawsuits seeking \$287 million to hold the company liable for injuries and fatalities.

Tokyo-based NYK on March 5 filed motions to dismiss the suits, saying U.S. courts lack jurisdiction over the incident that occurred about 60 nautical miles southwest of Yokosuka, where the warship was based at the time.

NYK Line, a Japanese shipping company, chartered the Philippine-flagged container ship ACX Crystal that collided with the Fitzgerald, a guided-missile destroyer, about 1:30 a.m. on June 17, 2017.

Seven Navy sailors were killed in the collision, and dozens more were injured physically and emotionally, according to the lawsuits filed Nov. 18 in the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The plaintiffs in the cases include mem-

bers of the seven fallen sailors’ families and 40 collision survivors. The two groups filed separate lawsuits, which argue the accident caused sailors injuries, mental anguish, lost wages, pain and suffering and “pre-death grief.”

“NYK Line is a Japanese corporation with its principal place of business in Tokyo, Japan,” the company’s lawyers wrote in the motions to dismiss. “The U.S. has never served as a surrogate home for NYK Line.”

Attorney David Schloss, who represents the sailors and families in the lawsuits, argued the case could be heard in U.S. court because NYK “has substantial, systematic and continuous contacts with the United States as a whole,” according to court documents.

NYK has a large global network spanning 60 regions and countries, including the United States. The company employs about 35,000 people, has a fleet of 710 ships and has consolidated revenue of about \$17.1 billion, according to its website.

However, NYK’s attorneys in their mo-

tions argue the company “has limited contacts with the U.S. when compared to its global contacts.”

In the past three years, 7% of NYK’s port calls have been to the U.S., and 90% of its annual revenue “is earned from business conducted outside of North America,” according to court documents.

Further, the attorneys said none of the allegations in the case relate “to NYK Line’s conduct in the U.S. or its contacts with the U.S.”

The judge may decide whether the case can be heard in U.S. court “later this year,” Schloss told Stars and Stripes in an email Tuesday.

A Navy report in late 2017 said the accident was preventable, and listed crew exhaustion, skipped certifications, poor watch-standing and training and manning problems among the causes.

An August report by the Japan Transport Safety Board said it was “somewhat likely” that the Fitzgerald was “not properly on the lookout” for ACX Crystal. That report also listed other contributing factors, in-

cluding the ACX Crystal’s failure to sound danger signals or contact the Fitzgerald before the crash, but did not assign blame to either party.

Schloss has been working with attorneys in Japan to pursue claims against the ACX Crystal’s owner, Dainichi Investment Corp. He expects to file lawsuits in a Japanese court “prior to the three-year anniversary of the collisions,” Schloss said.

Schloss said the motions to dismiss were “dissappointing but not surprising.”

“The filing of the motion is yet another attempt by NYK to evade legal and moral responsibility for this preventable tragedy,” Schloss said.

“Nevertheless, we intend to hold NYK accountable in the Eastern District of Louisiana, and we are confident that the court will agree that the clear precedents there support such jurisdiction.”

Requests for comment via email from NYK’s attorneys went unanswered Tuesday and Wednesday.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Troops in hunt for Kony eligible for medals

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Troops who were part of the hunt in central Africa for rebel warlord Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army are eligible for medals awarded to those who served in the global war on terrorism, the Defense Department has said.

Operation Observant Compass, which sought to capture Kony and neutralize the brutal LRA, "is hereby approved as a designated operation for award of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal," the Pentagon said in a Feb. 28 memo.

To qualify for the expeditionary medal, troops must have deployed to Observant Compass' broad area of operations during the period between October 2011, when the operation was formally launched, and its official end in September 2017, the memo said.

Observant Compass mainly operated in the border regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Central Africa Republic and Uganda.

Led by Kony, a self-proclaimed messiah who once had ambitions of taking over Uganda, the LRA caused havoc in central Africa for over two decades, kidnapping children and forcing them to join its ranks or serve as slaves, and causing tens of thousands of people to flee their homes.

U.S. special operations troops, including Green Berets and Navy SEALs, were part of the operation to try to shut down the LRA and capture Kony.

President Barack Obama ordered U.S. forces into central Africa in 2011 to work alongside African Union troops, who were in charge of the hunt for the warlord. The U.S. military also provided intelligence and logistical aid.

In the six years that the U.S. was involved in the campaign, the number of LRA fighters dropped from around 2,000 to less than 100, AFRICOM said in 2017.

A key part of the success in cutting the LRA's ranks was a campaign that encouraged the rebel group's fighters to abandon Kony and turn themselves over to interna-

tional authorities.

The hunt for Kony is one of a growing list of operations grouped under the global war on terror, which dates back to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Participants in other global war on terror operations — including Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Nomad Shadow, New Dawn, Inherent Resolve and Freedom of the Sentinel — are also eligible for the medals.

Those who served in support of airport security operations between Sept. 27, 2001, and May 31, 2002, are eligible for the GWOT Service Medal.

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Afghan presidential spokesman Sediq Seddiqi speaks during a press conference Wednesday in Kabul, Afghanistan.

US-Taliban deal gets unanimous approval from UN

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The United States won unanimous U.N. Security Council backing Tuesday for the ambitious peace deal it signed with the Taliban aimed at ending the long war in Afghanistan and bringing U.S. troops home.

The U.S.-sponsored resolution "welcomes the significant steps towards ending the war and opening the door to intra-Afghan negotiations" enabled by the U.S.-Taliban joint declaration signed Feb. 29.

The resolution also "welcomes the intention of all Afghan parties to pursue the successful negotiation of an inclusive political settlement and a permanent and comprehensive cease-fire."

But Afghanistan's rival leaders — President Ashraf Ghani and his former unity government partner Abdullah Abdullah — were each sworn in as the country's new president in separate ceremonies Monday, throwing plans for negotiations into chaos.

In addition, Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, the top U.S. commander for the Middle East, told the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday that Taliban attacks are higher than allowed in the plan and that he will recommend against full withdrawal of American troops if that continues.

The acting U.S. deputy ambassador at the U.N., Cherith Norman Chaleet, told the council after the vote that the Afghan presidential election dispute and "unacceptably high levels of violence by the Taliban" have not permitted talks among Afghans to start on time.

But she said Ghani and Abdullah both stated Monday that they will continue discussions aimed at agreeing on an inclusive government.

She also said Ghani signed a decree Tuesday on a prisoner re-

lease, which could result in a prisoner exchange and bring Afghans "one step closer to intra-Afghan negotiations."

Chaleet welcomed the council's vote, saying that "the support and engagement of the international community will continue to be critical in the next steps of the peace process."

"This is a hopeful moment, but it is only the beginning," she added. "We hope the people of Afghanistan seize the opportunity to achieve an historic peace settlement that ends the conflict in Afghanistan, preserves the gains of the last two decades in human rights, basic freedoms and the meaningful participation of women in political and civil institutions, and ensures that the territory of the Afghan people will never again be used by international terrorists to threaten the world."

The resolution affirms "that any political settlement must protect the rights of all Afghans, including women, youth and minorities." This language was added by council members who want to ensure women's rights are protected and the Taliban doesn't return to its previous draconian measures, including barring girls from education and women from work.

The resolution also expresses the council's readiness to review sanctions on individuals and groups once intra-Afghan negotiations start "in order to support the peace process," stressing that the Taliban's actions in reducing violence and advancing talks will affect the review.

Russia got language in the resolution on combating traffic in opiates from Afghanistan. And China, whose \$1 trillion "belt and road" global infrastructure program has projects in Afghanistan, got a reference to "efforts of regional cooperation for regional development" in the final text.

Taliban: Slow release of POWs to start soon

FROM FRONT PAGE

The government initially refused this, expressing concern that nothing in the deal prevented the fighters from returning to the battlefield. The POWs are also one of the few sources of leverage Kabul has going into the discussions.

But a decree issued by Ghani on Wednesday said that 100 prisoners a day will be released, starting Saturday, until 1,500 have been freed.

The remaining 3,500 prisoners would be released in groups of 500 every two weeks after the intra-Afghan talks begin, the decree said.

The freed prisoners will have their biometric data recorded and they will sign a guarantee that they will not return to combat, it said.

It wasn't immediately clear whether the Taliban would accept Ghani's offer or if it would

begin to release detainees in its custody. The group told Reuters last week that they would only begin talks with the government after roughly 5,000 of their fighters were released.

The Feb. 29 peace deal calls on the Taliban to release up to 1,000 prisoners, and for the government to free up to 5,000 detainees by Tuesday, March 10, which was also supposed to be the day that intra-Afghan negotiations would begin.

The names of the fighters the Taliban wants freed have been handed over to U.S. negotiators, a spokesman for the group, Suhail Shaheen, said on Twitter Tuesday.

The insurgent group has used "prisoner release ... to stall negotiations in the past," said Andrew Watkins, a senior Afghanistan analyst at the International Crisis Group. "This has the potential to

be a big problem."

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo last week called on the Afghan government and the Taliban "to stop posturing and start a practical discussion about prisoner releases."

Despite the delayed start to the intra-Afghan talks, U.S. forces began withdrawing from Afghanistan Tuesday, meeting an initial deadline set out in the U.S.-Taliban deal.

The number of U.S. troops is set to be reduced from about 13,000 to 8,600 by midsummer. Further drawdowns will depend on the Taliban fulfilling commitments they made in the deal, including starting talks with the government and preventing "any group or individual in Afghanistan from threatening the security of the United States and its allies."

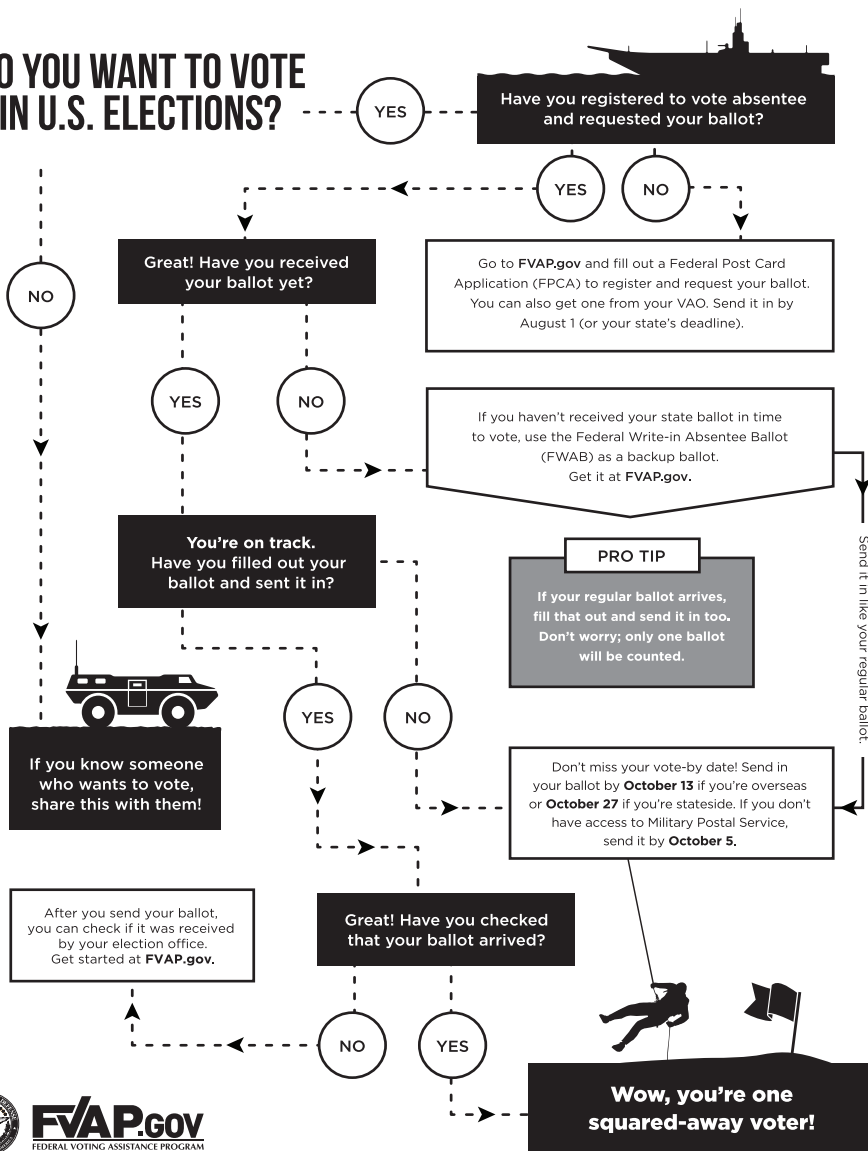
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RAHMAT GUL/AP

So you're stationed overseas and it's an election year...

This handy flowchart on absentee voting lays it all out.

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MILITARY

Marines' recovery slowed by terrain, safety concerns

By DAN LAMOTHE
The Washington Post

Details of the effort to recover the remains of two elite Marine Raiders killed in Iraq came into better focus Tuesday, with a top U.S. general saying that unifying mountain terrain and concern for the safety of other U.S. service members dragged the mission out for more than six hours.

Marine Gen. Kenneth "Frank" McKenzie, the chief of U.S. Central Command, told the House Armed Services Committee that commanders monitored the operation Sunday hour by hour and did everything they could in a challenging environment. Four other Americans were wounded in the operation.

"It's some of the worst terrain in the world," McKenzie said. "There's no way to do it faster than we did it."

The Marine Corps identified the fallen Americans on Tuesday as Capt. Moises Navas of Germantown, Maryland, and Gunnery Sgt. Diego Pongo of Simi Valley, California.

Navas was a Special Operations officer, and Pongo was a critical skills operator. The two men, both 34, were assigned to 2nd Marine Raider Battalion, a Special Operations force with headquarters at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The deaths, the first in combat for the U.S. military in Iraq since August, were announced as the tight-knit Marine Raider force marked the fifth anniversary of a helicopter crash off the coast of Florida that killed seven Raiders and four Louisiana National Guardsmen.

The Marines were killed during an operation with Iraqi forces on an Islamic State hideout in the Qara Chokh Mountains near Mahkmour, about 45 miles outside the city of Erbil. Islamic State fighters were entrenched in a tunnel complex, U.S. military officials said.

Army Col. Myles Caggins, a U.S. military spokesman in Iraq, said that the caves in the mountains hide both fighters and weapons caches. The militants who engaged the Marines on Sunday had both small arms and explosives. The coalition estimates

that about 15 to 25 of them were killed, Caggins said.

At the Pentagon, a senior U.S. military official, Navy Rear Adm. William Byrne Jr., told reporters that the terrain was "vertical."

"That in itself made it extremely difficult," he said. "It was a high-threat environment. We knew that going in, and we took the appropriate precautions going into a high-threat environment."

Byrne said the military is reviewing the incident, as the New York Times reported Monday night. The Times also reported that the forces called in to recover the Marines included some members of the elite Delta Force, a likely indication of the difficulty of the mission.

A Marine Raider who knew Navas and Pongo, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of their operations, said that when he deployed to Iraq a few years ago, the rough region of the firefight Sunday was a known ISIS hotbed.

U.S. forces observing the region could see electronic generators outside the mouths of caves with wires running inside, presumably providing electricity, the Raider said. Iraqi forces were weary of clearing the caves at the time, he added.

The Marine added that both men were well known to be good fathers, and that he often saw Navas at school events for their children in North Carolina. Pongo regularly finished first in individual training events, the Marine added.

"These guys were both natural-born leaders," he said. "Even people who were more senior in rank would stop and listen to what they had to say."

The commanding officer of the Marine Raider Regiment, Col. John Lynch, said in a statement released Tuesday that Navas and Pongo were "intelligent, courageous and loyal," and "on the path to be our organization's leaders in the future."

Lynch said that Navas had a wife, daughter and three young sons, while Pongo had a young girl.

Lynch recalled that Pongo had a larger-than-life personality and brought his mother to a Marine Corps birthday ball last fall and "outdanced the rest of us on the dance floor." He was trained as an advanced sniper, a foreign weapons instructor and a combat marksmanship leader, and was fluent in multiple languages, Lynch said.

Navas, often called "Mo," was born in Panama and grew up in Maryland on the outskirts of the nation's capital. He "cherished his time watching his children play sports," Lynch said. Navas was trained as a scout sniper, martial arts instructor and combat diver, and recently had been selected for promotion to major.



MANUEL BALCE CENETIA/AP

President Donald Trump presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Vice Chief of Staff Army Gen. Jack Keane in the East Room of the White House in Washington on Tuesday.

Trump presents retired four-star general with highest civilian honor

By DEB RIECHMANN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Retired four-star Gen. Jack Keane received the nation's highest civilian honor Tuesday at a White House ceremony hosted by President Donald Trump, who called the Army veteran a "visionary," a "brilliant strategist" and a "fearless patriot."

The crowd in the East Room gave Keane a standing ovation when the Medal of Freedom was placed around his neck.

"In 2006, Jack helped engineer the surge that stabilized the deteriorating situation in Iraq and allowed Iraqis to finally take charge of their own future," Trump said. "In the years since, Jack has continued to offer his sage counsel to military and policy leaders and to visit our troops on the frontiers. And Jack, I have to say, has given me a lot of good advice too."

Keane has not always agreed with Trump. He thought withdrawing U.S. forces from Syria was a strategic mistake, siding with former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who resigned over Trump's decision. Keane contended that while Islamic State was crushed during Trump's presidency, his decision would "lose the peace by withdrawing."

But Keane agreed with Trump's decision to pull out of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal negotiated during the Obama administration. Keane has felt that former U.S. presidents have coddled Tehran.

"General, you will be remembered as one of the finest and most dedicated soldiers in a long and storied history of the United States military. No question about it," Trump said.

In 2003, Keane was offered the position of Army chief of staff, but Trump said he turned it down and left the army after 38 years to care for his wife, Theresa, who was battling Parkinson's Disease.

Keane, 77, was born in Manhattan, N.Y. He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Ford-

'Despite having left the Army 17 years ago, I never left the 9/11 wars and America's focus on radical Islam and what they did to us.'

Retired Gen. Jack Keane
Medal of Freedom recipient

ham University and a master's degree in philosophy from Western Kentucky University. He later attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Army War College in Pennsylvania.

Keane was a paratrooper during the Vietnam War and later served in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo. In 1991, Keane helped save the life of former Army Gen. David Petraeus, who later became director of the CIA. Petraeus was accidentally shot during a live-fire exercise. "He had a hole about the size of a quarter in his back and is gushing with blood, and we stopped the bleeding and got him on a helicopter and got him to a surgeon," Keane recalled in 2014.

He served as the chief operating officer of the Army for more than four years and directed 1.5 million soldiers and civilians in 120 countries. He was in the Pentagon when terrorists crashed a jetliner into the building on Sept. 11, 2001, an event Keane said had changed his life.

"I lost 85 Army teammates, lived the tragedy up close, attended scores of funerals," Keane said.

"It was personal and I was angry. And despite having left the Army 17 years ago, I never left the 9/11 wars and America's focus on radical Islam and what they did to us."

Palantir seals major US Navy deal

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Palantir Technologies has sealed its first major deal with the U.S. Navy, public contract documents show, a major step forward for a West Coast tech company that has long struggled to break into the Pentagon's insular information technology industry.

The sole-source contract, worth about \$80 million, calls for a logistics management system for the service branch's warships and aircraft scattered across the globe. The Navy will use Palantir's software to fuse together existing data sets that are walled off from one another, forming a broader operating system the Pentagon is calling Naval Operational Business Logistics Enter-

prise, or NOBLE for short. The terms of the deal were finalized last week, Palantir spokeswoman Lisa Gordon said.

The sole-source award to Palantir came after a competitive prototyping process that involved 31 companies, and a separate period in which the government tested prototypes provided by two finalists. A separate approach proposed by Raytheon was passed over.

A contract justification document published by the Navy described Palantir as the only company that can "eliminate the redundant, resource-intensive, and stove-piped systems" it currently relies on. Company executives said the contract will also lay a foundation for the Navy's eventual adoption of artificial

intelligence.

"This is Palantir's first formal contract with the Navy and our work is successfully modernizing the Navy's operational supply, maintenance, and logistics enterprise," Doug Philippone, a former Army Ranger who leads Palantir's military business, said in an email.

The award came after a prototyping competition that used an increasingly-common process called "other transaction authority." Such awards allow the government to bypass procurement regulations to move quickly.

Under that approach more than 31 companies submitted responses and the government asked two finalists, Raytheon and Palantir, to try out their own separate prototypes.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Cold Response drill cut short over virus fears

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A U.S.-led cold weather exercise in Norway has been cut short because of concerns over the new coronavirus, U.S. European Command announced Wednesday.

"The decision is a precautionary measure in response to the ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 and to protect the health and safety of all participants and local population," EUCOM said in a statement.

After consulting with allies, Norwegian authorities made the decision to cancel the remainder of the Cold Response 20 exercise just two days after it started.

The cancellation comes days after nearly two dozen U.S. soldiers who were in Norway for the exercise were quarantined, amid fears they might have contracted the virus from a Norwegian service member who tested positive for it.

A string of military exercises have been canceled or scaled back because of coronavirus fears. Last week, EUCOM canceled a missile defense drill in Israel. And Tuesday, U.S. Africa Command said it was reducing the scope of a large exercise in Morocco to eliminate activities where troops were in close quarters.

For now, however, EUCOM said it still intends to move forward with Defender-

Europe 20, the largest Army exercise on the Continent in 25 years.

About 1,500 U.S. troops were part of Cold Response, which is one of the largest exercises in Europe.

"We are working closely with our Norwegian allies to manage the safe and orderly transition of our personnel," EUCOM said.

Other participants in the exercise, which focused on building up cold-weather warfighting capabilities, were the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. In total, around 15,000 troops were taking part.

Concerns about the new coronavirus hampered training from the start. On Sunday, the Finnish military announced it was pulling its 400 troops from the exercise, which was slated to run until March 19.

Even before the concerns about the virus emerged, planning for Cold Response was challenged by world events.

About 10,000 U.S. troops were initially supposed to take part in the exercise, but many of them were shifted to other missions, including in the Middle East following the killing in an American drone strike near Baghdad airport of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

Tuesday's announcement by AFRICOM concerned an exercise known as African Lion, which was set to start March 23 in



ISAIAH CAMPBELL/U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. Marines with Charlie Company, 2nd Law Enforcement Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group, conduct a 3-mile hike using snowshoes during cold-weather training near Bjerkvik, Norway, on Sunday. The Cold Response exercise was cut short because of concerns over the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Morocco. It will now only include activities that do not require lodging troops in close quarters, AFRICOM said.

"The safety and protection of all of our forces — U.S. and partner nation — is a priority," AFRICOM's Gen. Stephen J. Townsend in a statement. "Modifying the exercise improves readiness while minimizing risk to protect both U.S. and partner forces," he said.

American, Moroccan, Senegalese and Tunisian forces are taking part in the exercise.

Academic portions of the drill, which have already started, will continue.

African Lion has been a regular exercise

in Morocco for years. While it was traditionally led by the Marine Corps, it was shifted to the Army this year.

Maj. Gen. Roger Cloutier, commanding general of U.S. Army Africa, said there is still value in the exercise despite its scope being narrowed. Working with partners helps the Army "forge a coalition across multiple countries, force components, national and international organizations," he said.

Meanwhile, planning for next year's African Lion is already underway, AFRICOM said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Federal workforce on notice about mass telecommuting

By LISA REIN

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is racing to develop contingency plans that would allow hundreds of thousands of employees to work remotely full time, an extreme scenario to limit the coronavirus that would test whether the government can carry out its mission from home offices and kitchen tables.

The Office of Personnel Management, which oversees policy for the workforce of 2.1 million, has urged agency heads to “immediately review” their telework policies, sign paperwork with employees laying out their duties, issue laptops and grant access to computer networks.

The administration has not issued a widespread mandate, but

some offices already have acted. The Securities and Exchange Commission last Monday became the first federal agency in Washington to clear 2,400 employees from its headquarters after discovering that an employee might be infected.

That emergency decision follows similar steps by more than a dozen federal field offices in the Seattle area, the Interior Department in Denver and NASA’s Silicon Valley research center, which have either closed or shifted to telework as some employees tested positive for the virus.

On Tuesday, the International Trade Administration started sending staff home to self-quarantine if they have traveled out of the country. The State Department told its staff to set up emer-

gency teleconference drills, as well as alternate who comes into the office to use classified systems to ensure that colleagues only gather in small groups, according to an internal memo.

The virus’ fast spread led many private companies to send their staffs home to work remotely weeks ago. But some corners of the federal government, the country’s largest employer, are only now confronting what could be an unprecedented shift to how they serve the public — for weeks or even months.

Close to half the federal workforce was eligible to telework when President Donald Trump took office, on average one or two days a week, for snow days or sporadically. But few did it full time. Then the Trump administration

scaled back working from home as a regular practice at multiple large agencies.

Managers are now scrambling to expand the policy. Employees who now telework a day or two a week could expand to full time. Others could work from home for the first time.

Remote work is the linchpin of the White House’s escalating emergency planning efforts, which could be deployed as the crisis worsens. With coronavirus cases now in 36 states and the District of Columbia, the outbreak is forcing agencies to assess who on their staff is set up to telework, who must stay on the job to serve the public and how to ensure their safety while keeping essential services going.

Expanding telework already is

bringing complications, among them administrative and equipment hurdles and restrictions for thousands of employees who work with classified material and can’t bring it home.

Anxious employees are waiting for instructions that have so far been uneven. The Pentagon said that it’s moving quickly to ask employees who can to sign new telework agreements. The Internal Revenue Service, at the height of tax season, is not. Officials are expecting large numbers of absences in either case.

“This is uncharted territory,” said Paul Carlson, director of the Seattle Federal Executive Board, an association of senior officials that last week recommended telework for the area’s 22,000 employees.

Cruise passengers arrive at Georgia air base for quarantine

By JEFF MARTIN

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Some of the passengers from a cruise ship in California that carried people infected by the new coronavirus have arrived at an air base

in Georgia to begin a two-week quarantine, military officials said.

The passengers arrived early Wednesday at the base in Cobb County, just northwest of Atlanta, Dobbins Air Reserve Base said in a statement emailed to The Asso-

ciated Press.

Base officials didn’t specify the number of patients now on base, but they’ve previously said that they were planning for dozens.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will have full responsibility for all aspects of

the quarantine, and Dobbins’ personnel will have no contact with the passengers, the base’s statement said. The passengers taken to Dobbins were screened before arrival, and none have been showing symptoms, it said.

The Grand Princess docked

at the Port of Oakland on Monday after spending days off the California coast while quarantine plans were made. Test kits, flown to the ship by military helicopters and dropped on board, showed that 21 people had COVID-19.



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THE NEW SANNOS

VIRUS OUTBREAK

States, schools act to stop spread

Associated Press

Governors and other leaders scrambling to slow the spread of the coronavirus stepped up bans on large public gatherings and a rapidly expanding list of universities moved classes online, as the U.S. government's top infectious-disease expert Wednesday warned that the worst is yet to come.

With cases in the U.S. now topping 1,000 and the number of deaths climbing to 31, lawmakers and health officials set up containment zones and sought to limit contact with those who might be infected.

"I can say we will see more cases and things will get worse than they are right now," Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said on Capitol Hill.

As for how much worse, Fauci said that would depend on the ability of the U.S. to curtail the influx of travelers carrying the disease and state and community efforts to contain the outbreak.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill, Speaker Nancy Pelosi was moving swiftly toward House passage of a coronavirus aid package possibly this week as Congress re-buffed President Donald Trump's proposed payroll tax break and focused instead on sick pay and other resources to more immediately help workers hit by the crisis.

Pelosi planned to unveil the measure Wednesday, with voting possible as soon as Thursday, after talks with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, whom Trump tapped to negotiate with the Democratic leader. Mnuchin and Pelosi spoke again early Wednesday to discuss proposals for the package.

In Kentucky, Gov. Andy Beshear urged churches amid the virus crisis.

"I don't believe that whether you go to church during this period of time is a test of faith," he said. "I believe God gives us wisdom to protect each other and we should do that."

In hard-hit Washington state, Gov. Jay Inslee on Wednesday announced a ban of gatherings of more than 250 people in virtually the entire Seattle metro area, home to some 4 million people. The Seattle area accounts for about two-thirds of the nation's coronavirus deaths, including at least 19 from the same suburban nursing home.

Schools and houses of worship were shuttered in the New York



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

Dr. Anthony Fauci, right, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health, elbow-bumps Rep. Stephen Lynch, D-Mass., before a House Committee on Oversight and Reform hearing on the coronavirus situation, Wednesday on Capitol Hill.

City suburb of New Rochelle, epicenter of the nation's biggest known cluster of cases, with over 100. Gov. Andrew Cuomo said he intends to send the National Guard to help scrub public spaces and deliver food, though no troops appeared to be in place Wednesday morning.

UCLA, Yale and Stanford were among the universities announcing plans to send students home and hold classes remotely.

Chicago canceled its St. Patrick's Day parade, and the Coachella music festival that draws tens of thousands to the California desert near Palm Springs every April was postponed. One of the biggest resort operators in Las Vegas, MGM Resorts International, said it would close buffets at all of its Las Vegas Strip casinos.

For most people, the virus causes only mild or moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. For some, especially the elderly and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. Most people recover in a matter of weeks, as has happened with the majority of those infected in China.

For those in the middle of a quarantine, it's an anxious time waiting for the threat to pass.

Judy Aqua, who is in her 60s,

is quarantining herself at home in New Rochelle after possibly being exposed to someone with the virus.

"People are really afraid to go to the supermarket. They're afraid to go to the cleaner," she said. When her husband made a recent run to a post office, she told him to wear gloves.

Sanita Clara County in California, home to San Jose and Silicon Valley, has banned all gatherings of 1,000 people or more. The ban in Washington state would apply to sporting events such as Seattle Mariners baseball, according to a person who was familiar with the decision but wasn't authorized to discuss it publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

It could be just the beginning of disruptions to sports: Some college games will be played without fans in Ohio and California, and the NCAA said it will make decisions in the coming days about its men's and women's basketball health problems. Two conferences banned fans from their championships, and the Ivy League canceled its basketball tournaments altogether.

Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker declared a state of emergency as cases statewide jumped by 51 to 92. Of that number, 70 are now connected to a meeting

held last month by biotech company Biogen at a hotel in downtown Boston.

A woman from suburban Houston flew home from Italy after testing positive, and now everyone on the two flights she took could be at risk. Health officials urged passengers to quarantine themselves.

Some airport workers are also dealing with the outbreak, with several Transportation Security Administration officers at the San Jose airport testing positive. All TSA employees who had contact with them over the past 14 days are being quarantined at home, the agency said.

In Oakland, Calif., restless passengers on a coronavirus-struck cruise ship awaited their turn to disembark. By Tuesday night, Princess Cruises said about 1,400 of the 3,500 people on board had gotten off, and efforts were underway to move them to quarantine in their home countries or at military bases in California, Texas and Georgia.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom urged the state's nearly 40 million residents to avoid sporting events, concerts and other large gatherings and strongly warned the elderly to stay away from cruise ships.

ings, including meetings at work and frequent and thorough handwashing, and self-isolation where necessary.

Only one U.S. service member in Europe — a sailor in Naples — has tested positive for the virus.

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Test kits expected soon at Aviano

By KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — The 31st Fighter Wing should soon be able to test for the coronavirus on base, officials said at a virtual town hall meeting.

Test kits could arrive as early as next week, Lt. Col. Mark Dudley said Tuesday evening at the fifth town hall meeting Aviano has organized since Jan. 31, when Italy declared a health emergency over the coronavirus.

"We're looking forward to having that capability locally," Dudley said. Until the test kits arrive at the base in northern Italy — the hardest-hit area of the country, which has the second highest death toll from COVID-19 after China — on-base personnel have had to go to the hospital in Udine, about 44 miles away, to be tested, or have test kits sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, for analysis.

So far, no one at Aviano has tested positive for the virus, but 134 base personnel were quarantined or confined to their homes last week when they showed symptoms of COVID-19, the disease of virus causes.

Tests sent to Landstuhl came back negative for most of the isolated personnel at Aviano, but the results of several tests have not yet been received, Dudley said at an earlier town hall.

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte imposed restrictions on movement and public gatherings as the government struggled to stop the virus' spread.

As of Tuesday, 631 people in Italy had died of COVID-19 and more than 10,000 have been diagnosed with the coronavirus. Only one American service member, a sailor in Naples, has tested positive for the virus. He was staying at home and anyone he has had close contact with is being monitored, officials said.

The Italian health ministry has said four of the 116 cases in the Friuli Venezia-Giulia region were in the province of Pordenone, where Aviano is located. Other Italian provinces with U.S. bases are Vicenza, which as of Tuesday had 73 positive cases, Naples and Pisa, with 61 positive diagnoses each, and Catania, where 35 tests have come back positive.

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Army worker in Germany tests positive for virus

By IMMANUEL JOHNSON

Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — A civilian German employee of the Army in Bavaria has tested positive for the coronavirus, officials said Wednesday.

The employee, who works in the directorate of emergency

services, is being treated at a German medical facility, U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria said in a statement.

The employee works in Hohenfels, USAG Bavaria spokesman Nathan Van Schaik said.

The Army is trying to trace people with whom the employee

may have had contact, the statement said.

USAG Bavaria has advised base personnel to take precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the virus, including social distancing — standing at least 6 feet away from other people in public and avoiding large public gather-

VIRUS OUTBREAK

WHO declares a pandemic, decries 'alarming' inaction

Associated Press

ROME — Expressing increasing alarm about mounting infections, the World Health Organization declared Wednesday that the global coronavirus crisis is now a pandemic.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who heads the U.N. agency, said the WHO is "deeply concerned by the alarming levels of spread and severity" of the outbreak. He also expressed concern about "the alarming levels of inaction."

"We have, therefore, made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic," he said at a briefing in Geneva.

"All countries can still change the course of this pandemic. If countries detect, test, treat, isolate, trace and mobilize their people in the response," Tedros said.

Italy weighed imposing even tighter restrictions on daily life and announced billions in financial relief Wednesday to cushion economic shocks from the coronavirus, its latest efforts to adjust to the fast-evolving health crisis that silenced the usually bustling heart of the Catholic faith, St. Peter's Square.

Premier Giuseppe Conte said he would consider requests from Lombardy, Italy's hardest-hit region, to toughen the already extraordinary anti-virus lockdown that was extended nationwide Tuesday. Lombardy wants to shut down nonessential businesses and reduce public transportation.

These additional measures would be on top of travel and social restrictions that imposed an eerie hush on cities and towns across the country from Tues-

'All countries can still change the course of this pandemic. If countries detect, test, treat, isolate, trace and mobilize their people in the response.'

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
head of World Health Organization

day. Police enforced rules that customers stay 3 feet apart and ensured that businesses closed by 6 p.m.

But Conte said fighting Italy's more than 10,000 infections—the biggest outbreak outside of China—must not come at the expense of civil liberties. His caution suggested that Italy is unlikely to adopt the draconian quarantine measures that helped China to push down new infections from thousands per day to a trickle now.

China's new worry is that the coronavirus could re-enter from abroad. Beijing's city government announced that all overseas visitors will be quarantined for 14 days. Of 24 new cases that China reported Wednesday, five arrived from Italy and one from the United States. China has had over 81,000 virus infections and over 3,000 deaths.

For most, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for a few, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illnesses, including pneumonia. More than 119,000 people have been infected worldwide and over 4,200 have died.

But the vast majority of people recover. According to the WHO, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

For the global economy, the repercussions are profound, with increasing concerns of wealth- and job-wrecking recessions.

Italy's government announced it is earmarking nearly \$28 billion to boost anti-virus efforts and soften economic blows, including delaying tax and mortgage payments by families and businesses.

Normal life was increasingly being upended.

With police barring access to St. Peter's Square, emptying it of tens of thousands of people who usually come on Wednesdays for the weekly papal address, Pope Francis instead livestreamed prayers from the privacy of his Vatican library.

Athletes who usually thrive on crowds grew increasingly wary of them. Spanish soccer club Getafe said it wouldn't travel to Italy to play Inter Milan, preferring to forfeit their Europa League match rather than risk infections.

Olympic champion skier Michael Shiffrin said she would be



ARROW FAVILA/AP

A baby wears a protective mask in Manila, Philippines, on Wednesday. The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic Wednesday, as normal life in countries with coronavirus cases was increasingly being upended.

limiting contacts with fans and fellow competitors, tweeting that "this means no selfies, autographs, hugs, high fives, handshakes or kiss greetings."

In the U.S., the caseload passed 1,000, and outbreaks on both sides of the country stirred alarm.

In Europe, deaths soared among Italy's aging population. Authorities said Italy has suffered 631 deaths, with an increase of 168 fatalities recorded Tuesday. In Spain, the number of cases surged past the 2,000-mark on Wednesday. Belgium announced its first virus-related death, of a 90-year-old woman.

"Right now, the epicenter—the new China—is Europe," said Robert Redfield, the head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Markets across Asia dropped Wednesday despite Wall Street's

gains a day earlier. Investors seemed encouraged by promises by President Donald Trump of a relief package to cushion economic pain from the outbreak. Governments around Asia and elsewhere have also announced billions of dollars in stimulus funds, including packages revealed in Japan on Tuesday and Australia on Wednesday.

"The world is facing a medical emergency that monetary and fiscal policy cannot fix," said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg private bank.

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Report: Iran VP, 2 Cabinet members have virus

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's senior vice president and two other Cabinet members have contracted the new coronavirus, a semiofficial news agency reported Wednesday as the death toll in the Islamic Republic from the outbreak rose by 62 to 354.

The report by the Fars news agency, believed to be close to Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, comes as President Hassan Rouhani took control of the country's much-criticized response to the virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes. Authorities announced that there were some 9,000 confirmed cases of the virus across Iran.

The Fars story also comes amid days of speculation about the health of Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri. Jahangiri has not been seen in pictures of recent top-level meetings, raising concerns about him.

Fars says the others sick are Ali Asghar Mounesan, minister

of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism, and Reza Rahmani, minister of industry, mines and business.

There was no immediate report on state media about the officials being ill and no other media outlet in Iran immediately carried the report. Fars published it in a picture list of names in Farsi, with Jahangiri's name at the top.

Across the Mideast, the vast majority of the 9,700 people who have contracted the coronavirus and the COVID-19 illness it causes are in hard-hit Iran or had recently returned from there. The Islamic Republic has one of the world's worst death tolls outside of China, the epicenter of the outbreak. Outside of Iran, only Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon have recorded deaths from the virus in the Middle East.

In the Gulf Arab island nation of Bahrain, authorities say their number of confirmed cases on Wednesday spiked by nearly 70% to 189 confirmed cases. The 77

new cases were all on a returning flight of Bahraini evacuees from Iran.

There are concerns that the number of infections across Iran is much higher than the confirmed cases reported by the government, which is struggling to contain or manage its spread. The rising casualty figures each day in Iran suggest the fight against the new coronavirus is far from over.

Iran's supreme leader had said

Tuesday that the Islamic Republic will recognize doctors and nurses who die combating the new coronavirus as "martyrs."

The decision by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei comes amid a propaganda campaign already trying to link the fight against the virus to Iran's long, bloody 1980s war with Iraq. Its forces, which include virologists, faced chemical weapons during Iran's eight-year war against Iraq.



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NATION

Biden extends his delegate lead with wins in 4 states

By WILL WEISSERT
AND LAURIE KELLMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Joe Biden decisively won Michigan's Democratic presidential primary, seizing a key battleground state that helped propel Bernie Sanders' insurgent candidacy four years ago. The former vice president's victory there, as well as in Missouri, Mississippi and Idaho, dealt a serious blow to Sanders and substantially widened Biden's path to the nomination.

Biden again showed strength Tuesday with working-class voters and African Americans, who are vital to winning the Democratic nomination.

Sanders captured North Dakota's caucuses, a repeat win in a state he won four years ago. When results from Fargo were finally tallied Wednesday, Sanders had a thumping victory, with roughly 53% of the vote to Biden's 40%. But the state offered just 14 pledged delegates.

The six-state contest Tuesday marked the first time voters weighed in on the primary since it effectively narrowed to a two-person race between Sanders and Biden. And the first four states on Tuesday went to Biden, a dramatic reversal for a campaign that appeared on the brink of collapse just two weeks ago. Now it is Sanders, whose candidacy was ascendant so recently, who must contemplate a path forward.

Addressing supporters in Philadelphia, Biden noted that many had "declared that this candidacy was dead" only days ago, but "now we're very much alive." He also asked Sanders supporters to back him going forward.

"We need you, we want you, and there's a place in our campaign for each of you. I want to thank Bernie Sanders and his supporters for their tireless energy and their passion," Biden said. "We share a common goal, and together we'll beat Donald Trump."

Even as the contours of the race came into shape, however, new uncertainty was sparked by fears of the spreading coronavirus. Both candidates abruptly canceled rallies in Ohio that were scheduled for Tuesday night.

The Democratic National Committee also said that Sunday's debate between Sanders and Biden would be conducted without an audience.

After Sanders upset Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, his loss there Tuesday was particularly sobering. It undermined his argument that he could appeal to working-class voters and that he could expand the electorate with new young voters.

One of the few bright notes for Sanders was his strength among young voters, but even that has a downside because they didn't turn out enough to keep him competitive. Sanders won 72% of those under 30 in Missouri and 65% in Michigan, according to AP Vote-Cast. The senator was also about even with Biden among voters ages 30 to 44.

According to an Associated Press analysis, Biden had picked up at least 176 new delegates: 71 in Michigan, 40 in Missouri, 31 in Mississippi, six in North Dakota, 17 in Washington and 11 in Idaho on Tuesday. Sanders got 110: 51 in Michigan, 23 in Missouri, two in Mississippi, nine in Idaho, eight in North Dakota and 17 in Washington.



MATT ROURKE/AP

Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden, accompanied by his wife, Jill, speaks at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia on Tuesday. Biden picked up at least 153 new delegates in Tuesday's primaries in six states.

Sanders mulls future after primary losses

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Bernie Sanders has a choice.

The face of the Democrats' far-left flank is suddenly staring up at a towering wall of opposition from his own party, an urgent call to unify against President Donald Trump and a growing delegate disadvantage.

And as unlikely as it may seem less than two weeks after losing his front-runner status, Sanders is now being forced to consider whether he will continue his increasingly uphill fight for the Democratic Party's 2020 presidential nomination.

The Vermont senator did not publicly address his supporters' Tuesday night after suffering a devastating primary defeat in Michigan and decisive losses in Missouri and Mississippi. He was instead hunkered down at home in Vermont after being forced to cancel a rally in Cleveland because of concerns over the new coronavirus.

The Biden and Sanders campaigns may be going in opposite directions, but a Sanders exit in the coming days would be a surprise. The 78-year-old democratic socialist is nothing if not willing to take on the political establishment against all

odds. Four years ago, under similar pressure in a primary matchup against Hillary Clinton, Sanders fought on for months before ultimately backing Clinton in July.

The Democrats' desperate desire to defeat Trump may change his calculus in 2020, however. Should Sanders get out soon, he could save Democrats months of a messy and expensive primary fight. But an early departure would also deprive the Democrats' most passionate supporters, including many young people, of the one man who embodies the dramatic change they crave. And there is reason to question whether they would rally behind Biden.

Sanders' most prominent ally in Congress, New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, couldn't hide her disappointment.

"There's no sugarcoating it. Tonight's a tough night," she said in an Instagram live post. "Tonight's a tough night for the movement overall. Tonight's a tough night electorally."

Sensing disaster, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee issued an afternoon statement calling for Sanders to not drop out — or at least not before this Sunday's debate.

Weinstein sentenced to 23 years in landmark #MeToo case

By MICHAEL R. SISK,
TOM HAYS AND JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Harvey Weinstein was sentenced Wednesday to 23 years in prison for rape and sexual assault, a sight the Hollywood mogul's multitude of accusers thought they would never see.

Weinstein, who was accused of violating scores of women, was convicted last month of raping a woman in a New York City hotel room in 2013 and forcibly performing oral sex on another woman at his apartment in 2006. He faced a maximum of 29 years in prison.

Both women that Weinstein was convicted of assaulting — a once-aspiring actress and a former TV and film production assistant — spoke in court Wednesday before Judge James Burke announced the sentence, confronting Weinstein again after

their testimony helped seal his conviction at the landmark #MeToo trial.

Weinstein, who has maintained that any sexual activity was consensual, also spoke in court, saying he had fond memories of his accusers.

Looking back during the trial at emails they exchanged, he said, he thought they had a good friendship. "I'm not going to say these aren't great people. I had wonderful times with these people. I'm just genuinely confused. Men are confused about this issue."

Burke also heard from Weinstein's lawyers, who pleaded for leniency because of his age and frail health, and prosecutors, who said the man once celebrated as a titan of Hollywood deserved a harsh sentence that would account for allegations of wrongdoing dating to the 1970s.

Under state law, Burke was able to con-

sider evidence outside the scope of the trial in forming his sentence.

In their sentencing letter, prosecutors outlined 16 examples they said showed Weinstein "trapped women into his exclusive control" so he could sexually assault them, starting when he was working as a music producer in Buffalo in 1978.

Weinstein was sentenced a week shy of his 68th birthday, and his lawyers argued that a lengthy prison term would, in effect, be a life sentence. They sought a five-year sentence, the mandatory minimum on the more serious of the two charges that jurors found him guilty of.

Weinstein, who used a walker throughout the trial, arrived at the courthouse Wednesday in a wheelchair because of back problems from a car crash last summer. He also has a condition that requires shots in his eyes and last week had a stent

placed to unblock an artery.

The agency that runs New York's state prisons said every inmate is evaluated to determine which facility meets his or her security, medical, mental health and other needs.

Now that Weinstein has been sentenced, his lawyers can move forward with a promised appeal.

Weinstein was also charged in California with raping a woman at a Los Angeles hotel on Feb. 18, 2013, after pushing his way inside her room, and sexually assaulting a woman in a Beverly Hills hotel suite the next night.

Weinstein could get up to 28 years in prison on charges of forcible rape, forcible oral copulation, sexual penetration by force and sexual battery in the California case. Authorities have not said when he would go there to face those charges.

WORLD

Russia OKs bill allowing Putin to stay in power past 2024

Associated Press

MOSCOW — The Russian parliament approved a sweeping constitutional reform in the third and final reading Wednesday, a move that will allow President Vladimir Putin to stay in power for another 12 years after his current term ends in 2024.

The Kremlin-controlled lower house, the State Duma, endorsed a set of amendments to the con-

stitution and a provision resetting the term count for Putin after the revised constitution goes into force by a 383-0 vote with 43 abstentions. A nationwide vote on the proposed amendments is set for April 22.

Kremlin critics condemned the move as a cynical manipulation and called for protests.

Putin, a 67-year-old former KGB officer, has ruled Russia for more than 20 years. After serv-

ing for two consecutive four-year terms — a limit outlined in the current version of the constitution — Putin shifted to the prime minister's seat in 2008, with his close ally Dmitry Medvedev becoming a placeholder president.

The length of the presidency was extended to six years under Medvedev, and in 2012 Putin returned to the Kremlin as president. In 2018, he was re-elected for another six years.

The constitutional reform passed by the Duma on Wednesday would allow Putin to run for presidency two more times after 2024. Ahead of the national vote, it will be reviewed by Russia's Constitutional Court.

The changes redistribute the executive powers of the Russian government in Moscow and further strengthen the power of the presidency, while also banning same-sex marriage and listing "a

belief in God" as one of Russia's traditional values.

The proposal to restart the term clock for the current president was put forward by 83-year-old former Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova, now a Duma deputy, during the second reading of the amendments on Tuesday. Following Tereshkova's speech, Putin quickly arrived at parliament to address the lawmakers and supported the idea.



Kyodo News/AP

A woman throws flowers to the sea in tribute to the victims of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in northern Japan on Wednesday.

Japan marks anniversary of tsunami

Associated Press

TOKYO — Some residents along the Japanese northern coast stood on roadsides overlooking the sea, offering silent prayers for their loved ones lost in a massive earthquake and tsunami nine years ago Wednesday. But in Tokyo and many other places around Japan, the day was being remembered without a main government ceremony due to the coronavirus outbreak.

On March 11, 2011, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami devastated large swaths of Japan's northern coast and triggered a meltdown at a nuclear power plant in Fukushima, contaminating large areas and displacing many residents.

For the past eight years, residents and officials have gathered at local town halls to pray, while in

Tokyo, the government held a main memorial attended by the Imperial Family members, televised live nationwide. This year, memorial events have been called off following Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's request to cancel, postpone or downsize gatherings as part of measures to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

In Tokyo, Abe and his ministers gathered at the Prime Minister's Office and offered a silent prayer at 2:46 p.m., the moment the offshore earthquake struck nine years ago. At the outset of his speech, Abe apologized over the cancellation of the government ceremony. Japan has confirmed more than 1,200 cases of the coronavirus, including 696 from a cruise ship and 19 deaths.

Abe said reconstruction of the disaster hit areas is now "at its finishing stage."

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The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Officials: Man tried to bite off woman's finger

MD EDGEWOOD — A Maryland man was charged with assault after authorities alleged he bit off part of his sister-in-law's finger during a confrontation in which she refused to leave his home.

Harford County Sheriff's officials were dispatched to an Edgewood home where they found Richard Young, 61, yelling in the street, news outlets reported. Young had called deputies earlier in the day and demanded his wife's sister leave his house, authorities said.

A fight between he and the woman became physical when Young bit into her hand, sheriff's spokesman Col. William Davis said.

"Somehow her finger ended up in his mouth and he bit off a portion of her finger, which was hanging on by basically what was being described as a threat of flesh," Davis told WBAL-TV.

Health officials confirm dengue fever case

FL KEY WEST — A case of dengue fever was confirmed in the Florida Keys, health officials said.

The patient has not been identified publicly by name or exact location, according to Alison Kerr, a spokeswoman for the Florida Department of Health in Monroe County.

"All indications are that this infection was locally acquired," Kerr told the Miami Herald.

The patient has been treated and is expected to fully recover, she said.

The virus is carried by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which also can carry the virus for yellow fever, Zika and chikungunya.

Officials: Band has 'concerning' traditions

OH ATHENS — An investigation into hazing allegations against Ohio University's marching band found several "concerning" unsanctioned band traditions, according to university documents.

The Marching 110 is one of several campus groups that was investigated last fall for hazing allegations that led to the suspension of all the university's fraternities. The investigation could lead to the removal of some students from the band, The Columbus Dispatch reported.

Assistant Dean of Students Taylor Tackett recommended the College of Fine Arts conduct a membership review which would include removing certain members, as well as implementing a risk management and assessment plan and anti-hazing workshops.

Police: Mom arrested after child left in car

AZ CHANDLER — A woman faces child abuse and endangerment charges after her toddler daughter was found alone in the driver's seat of a car that had its engine running,



GEOFF CRIMMINS, THE MOSCOW-PULLMAN (IDAHO) DAILY NEWS/AP

Going along for the ride

India Luker lets her family's dogs pull her down the sidewalk on inline skates while she walks them Monday in Moscow, Idaho.

according to Chandler police.

They said Hanan Regina Dema, 22, was arrested and also is accused of drug possession.

Police said when they removed the 3-year-old girl from the car, they saw drugs and drug paraphernalia in the center console of the vehicle.

They said Dema returned to the car about 18 minutes later with takeout food and was taken into custody.

Sheriff: Mom high on PCP calls 911 for ride

LA IOWA — A Louisiana man who was smoking marijuana laced with PCP apparently wanted to take a ride so he called his local sheriff's office, authorities said.

Jeff Davis Parish Sheriff's officials said Charles Ray Stevens,

32, was arrested on criminal mischief charges.

A sheriff's office press release said someone called the 911 emergency center four times and would not answer any questions. Instead, the male caller made short comments and said he "wanted to take a ride."

Deputies went to the caller's house and spoke with a woman who said her fiancé had been smoking marijuana laced with PCP.

Deputies then arrested Stevens and took him for a ride to the parish jail.

Officials: High water pushes shipwreck

MI ROGERS CITY — Wreckage from a freighter that sank in Lake Huron around 115 years ago has moved

toward Michigan's shoreline due to high water levels and waves, weakening the ruins further, officials said.

Joseph S. Fay was a ship that sank on Oct. 19, 1905, The Alpena News reported.

One side of the shipwreck had moved about 10 feet inland during a storm last October, said Eric Klein, lighthouse caretaker. He added that it has since been pushed further inland following a series of storms and estimated it's now about 25 feet from its original location near the 40 Mile Point Lighthouse.

Klein said the waves have damaged the shipwreck over time.

Wayne Lusardi, state Maritime Archaeologist, said even though water levels in the Great Lakes fluctuate over time, it's unusual that waves are exposing artifacts and shipwreck pieces that haven't been seen in a while.

THE CENSUS

\$1K The value of beer a Louisiana couple is charged with stealing from Target

stores. The couple made six runs to two Baton Rouge Target locations less than 10 miles apart between Feb. 24 and 29, according to East Baton Rouge Sheriff's office documents obtained by news outlets. Ashley Forbes, 32, and her husband, Matthew Forbes, 35, were captured on security cameras filling shopping baskets with cases of beer before slipping out of the stores without paying. The Advocate reported, citing the sheriff's records.

Man pleads guilty in dog park death

PA PHILADELPHIA — A man pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in the death of another man during a confrontation while both were walking their dogs in a Philadelphia dog park.

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that the plea by Matthew Oropeza, 25, was non-negotiated, meaning the judge will determine the sentence by a May 28 hearing.

Authorities said the defendant knocked Drew Justice, 38, down after the victim told him not to let his dog run unleashed in the dog park in January of last year. Justice fell backward, hit the ground and died shortly afterward, officials said.

License plate would honor shooting victims

CO AURORA — Campaigners for a new Colorado license plate option hope to honor victims of a theater shooting.

The campaign by nonprofit organization Aurora Rise needs 3,000 signatures to start the process of obtaining state approval for the license plate. The Aurora Sentinel reported.

The organization was established following the July 2012 mass shooting at a movie theater in Aurora. James Holmes killed 12 people and wounded numerous others inside the theater.

The license plate would raise funds to benefit the state's Victim Compensation Fund.

One of two red pandas at zoo has died

AL BIRMINGHAM — One of the two red pandas at an Alabama zoo died, the zoo said.

The Birmingham Zoo said in a news release that Parker, a 4-year-old male red panda, was found dead. There was no sign of physical injuries or illness and an examination didn't immediately reveal the cause of death, the zoo said, adding that more test results were pending.

There were no signs of illness in its other red panda, a 9-year-old female named Sorrel, the zoo said.

From wire reports

FACES

Not just a rock star

Mick Jagger relishes first film role in nearly 20 years in 'Burnt Orange Heresy'

By ANN HORNADAY
The Washington Post

A funny thing happens when you interview Mick Jagger. He'll be talking about all manner of subjects — the vagaries of art collecting, the similarities in live performance and screen acting, the ambiguities embedded in the latest film he's in — and he could be any cultured, well-educated 76-year-old Brit who knows his way around the world. Then, he'll say something — something brief, inconsequential, off-handed — that reminds you that the man on the other end of the line is Mick "Preskin" Jagger.

That moment occurred during a brief conversation last week, when Jagger phoned from Paris to talk about the role he plays in "The Burnt Orange Heresy," a twisty little thriller — part Hitchcock, part Highsmith — set amid the art world at its most scheming and hyper-committed. Jagger plays Joseph Cassidy, a collector living in palatial isolation on the shores of Lake Como, who invites a cynical art critic (Claes Bang) to visit for a weekend; Cassidy, it turns out, harbors a hidden agenda, which becomes all the more treacherous when it affects the young woman — played by Elizabeth Debicki — who comes along as the writer's last-minute date. The plot thickens when the enigmatic Sutherland shows up as a famous, and famously reclusive, painter.

Like most of the dramatic personae in "The Burnt Orange Heresy," Cassidy is prone to deception, dissembling and perhaps something even more dangerous; Jagger leans into his part with the relaxed, playful relish that suggests a man having the time of his life.

"One of my character's roles is to kick off the action," Jagger explains, noting that until he shows up, the audience might think they're in for a steamy romance set against a fabulously romantic backdrop.

"I was very aware that I had to do that properly, to put the game in play," he says. "Up to that point, you're following these two people having an affair, you know, and you're thinking 'That's kind of hot.' They're kind of hot, and they're having this wild affair in Europe, you know, and then what? You don't know what they're doing, really. They're not doing anything. They just seem to be hanging out in Italy. And then (Cassidy) puts them into the narrative, which carries on for the rest of the film and makes her life rather difficult."

It's those kind-of-hots, uttered in Jagger's distinctive, Cockney-adjacent cadence, that make one snap to and remember that, oh yeah, the actor on the line promoting his latest project also happens to be one of rock 'n' roll's most enduring and iconic figures. And, in a way, it's precisely because Jagger is such a legendary frontman that he was a natural choice for a part meant to, ahem, start it up. The kind of projection and ostentatious physicality it takes to be a rock star might seem



PHOTOS BY JOSE MARO, SONY PICTURES CLASSICS/AP

Mick Jagger is taking another crack at acting with "The Burnt Orange Heresy." Jagger plays a devilish art collector who cunningly convinces an art journalist to use a rare interview with a reclusive artist as an opportunity to steal one of his paintings.

to be diametrically opposed to the kind of restraint and transparency that define a great screen performance. But Jagger sees more similarities than differences.

"If the part requires it, which they quite often do, you have to exude a certain amount of energy and life," he explains. "If you're watching a movie and in the scene, one of the actors seems a bit dead ... the scene becomes a bit lifeless. So without overdoing it, you've got to be vital, so to speak, on the screen to make the scene keep the audience's attention."

It's been almost 20 years since Jagger had a major role in a movie. Giuseppe Capotondi, who directed "The Burnt Orange Heresy," says he hadn't considered Jagger for the role of Cassidy until he got word that the musician was interested in doing a film. Capotondi sent Jagger the script, "and obviously

he must have liked it, because he said, 'Come and meet me.' We went to see him in his office and he said yes. It was very straightforward."

For Jagger, "The Burnt Orange Heresy" is less a comeback than the result of a number of salutary forces aligning, including being offered a script to read in the first place. "To be honest, there are so many actors out there who are very good, and they're all hustling like crazy," he explains. "And I'm kind of really not, because I've got, like, other interests."

He adds that even though he has only a small amount of screen time, "It wasn't just a walk-on (where) they use your name. It was enough to be able to make a character out of, I thought. And to be able to create something."

At first, the film — an adaptation of a novel by Charles Willeford — was set in Florida during the 1970s; Capotondi and screenwriter Scott B. Smith changed the time frame and the setting, which was all to the good, as far as Jagger was concerned. He'll consider anything that "piques my interest, especially if it's not six months of my life that I have to spend in the Canadian Rockies in the winter or something." In the case of "The Burnt Orange Heresy," he notes, his role entailed only four or five days' shooting in mid-autumn at Lake Como, "a place where I'd actually never been, which was very beautiful, with very nice people. I thought it was quite a fun idea to do, and that if I could bring it off, I would."

Jagger even went so far as to suggest that Cassidy speak in a Chelsea accent from when



Jagger, right, with Elizabeth Debicki and Claes Bang, left, in a scene from "The Burnt Orange Heresy."

it was scruffily bohemian rather than posh. "He's an actor at the end of the day. He's not just a singer trying his skills at acting," Capotondi says, adding that Jagger reminded him of the great stars of Hollywood's Golden Age, the ones "who sort of gilded into a room rather than walked."

The role of Cassidy is one of just a handful of movie roles Jagger has done since 1970, when he made his feature debut in the Australian outlaw drama "Ned Kelly" and "Performance," in which he played a darker, more louche version of himself. If there are comparisons to be made between the latter film and "The Burnt Orange Heresy" — both of which traffic in themes of art, fraudulence, reclusiveness and dopelgangsters — Jagger is reluctant to see too tidy a fit.

"I suppose I've done so few films you've got very little to reference!" he says with a laugh.

And of course, he had to battle a formidable competitor that has dogged him throughout his movie career, the character he spent years creating and refining that we now know as the Dionysian, alluringly androgynous, sexily strutting persona of Mick Jagger. He concedes that his larger-than-life stage presence has sometimes proved an obstacle. "You have to overcome that and make people believe you're not that character," he says. "But that's acting."

Jagger is pleased that the character of Cassidy in "The Burnt Orange Heresy" doesn't resemble off-screen Mick Jagger in the slightest. In fact, he observes, the role of Cassidy was originally written for a woman. "I think it was going to be played by Judi Dench," he says, and suddenly he's sent into a fit of giggles at the mental image he just conjured. "Maybe she'll get one of my parts," Jagger says, still laughing. "Who knows? Who knows?"

Coachella music fest rescheduled for October

From wire services

The uber-popular Coachella music festival has been postponed from its usual two-week-end-run in April to October due to concerns about the growing coronavirus.

The festival's producer Goldenvoice made the announcement Tuesday, also confirming that Stagecoach, a country music festival, will also be postponed. Coachella, held in Southern California, will now take place on Oct. 9-11 and Oct. 16-18, while Stagecoach will take place Oct. 23-25.

Coachella hopes to feature most of the same acts that were originally slated for April, including headliners Rage Against the Machine, Travis Scott and Frank Ocean. It was expected to draw 250,000 fans over its two week-ends to see more than 150 acts.

The company said all passes for original dates will be honored for the rescheduled shows, and customers will be notified by Friday on how to obtain a refund if they cannot attend.

The postponements follow SX-SW's announcement March 6 that the city of Austin had pulled the plug on its SX series of music, media and film conferences.

In other virus-related entertainment news:

■ **The Academy of Country Music** said its April 5 awards show will still go on at the MGM Garden Arena in Las Vegas, but officials are monitoring the spread of the coronavirus. The show announced Wednesday that host and reigning ACM entertainer of the year, Keith Urban will perform, as well as nominee Miranda Lambert with Lindsay Ell, Caylee Hammack, Elle King, Ashley McBryde and Tenille Townes.

■ **Santana** said he had canceled the European tour dates of his Miraculous 2020 World Tour and that refunds will be available through point of purchase. The tour was scheduled to start March 17 in Poland.

■ **Persepolis** was also set to launch its world tour in Poland — a day before Santana's show — but posted a statement saying they would have to cancel the European leg of the tour.

■ **Zac Brown Band** said it was postponing the spring leg of its The Owl Tour, which would have kicked off Thursday in St. Louis.

■ The "Dr. Phil" daytime talk show will take without a studio audience for roughly two weeks as a precaution against the new coronavirus. The show typically tapes with an audience of about 300 people at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles. The show expects to resume audience tapings the week of March 23, according to statement announcing the decision Tuesday. The move will affect a dozen episodes.

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OPINION

The US economy is now in uncharted waters

By TYLER COWEN

Bloomberg Opinion

How bad COVID-19 will be for the U.S. economy is almost impossible to say, since there are few precedents to look to. By considering two extreme scenarios, however, it is possible to get a sense of what the issues are.

First, consider the relatively optimistic view: COVID-19 will have effects akin to what economists call a seasonal business cycle — which is to say, it will be over quickly and without much lasting damage.

For context, note that the U.S. economy usually slows in the first quarter. Christmas sales are over, stores are no longer hiring extra workers, and the pace of activity declines, whether it is publishers releasing books or families going on vacation. These seasonal cycles usually don't make the headlines, because most economic data are seasonally adjusted.

That said, in percentage terms, the economic declines from seasonal cycles are often larger than from recessions. The pain is not bad, however, because the business cycle is over quickly, and by the time the second quarter rolls around the economy is usually picking up steam again.

So if COVID-19 were to hit the economy like a seasonal cycle, it might look as follows: Public events, entertainment and face-to-face services would all dramatically contract, starting sometime this month. Employers in those sectors would cut back on employee hours and lay off some marginal workers. Uber and Lyft rides would plummet. There would be a more general decline of purchasing power, and that in turn would spread the decline to many

other sectors.

Still, in this scenario there is also a rapid path back to recovery. At some point the terror of COVID-19 will lift, just as cases in many parts of China now seem to be declining. Once public health conditions improve, retail, entertainment and services can gear back up. Both production and purchasing power will bounce back, similar to how they normally do after the first-quarter doldrums.

In fact, after having been cooped up for a few months, U.S. workers might be especially eager to get back to their jobs and U.S. consumers might be very keen to get out and spend.

But there is a much more worrying scenario. Rather than drawing an analogy with temporary seasonal cycles, an alternative model draws a parallel with cascading debt and recession. At the same time, adding a few more handfulls of sand causes a kind of avalanche, leaving just an amorphous heap?

This less sanguine option might look like this: The Chinese economic slowdown leads to a permanent loss of momentum and a deep recession. At the same time, with Italy closed down, its government defaults, but the European Union is unable to resolve the matter (and the associated bank failures) in a timely and resolute manner. Governments vacillate between policies that make it easier for people to stay at home to limit the spread of the disease and policies designed to get them back in the workplace.

The U.S. would be caught up in the general loss of confidence, as well as the contagion from European banks. But that is only the beginning. As schools close to

limit the spread of COVID-19, single parents would have to stay home, and the resulting production bottlenecks would plague the U.S. economy. Maybe New York City would have to cut back on the number of subway trains it runs, and much of the city's economy would grind to a halt. Supply chain problems from China would persist, hitting everything from medicines to the ordinary goods found in a Walmart.

The problems of missing goods in the supply chain, workplace absenteeism, family health emergencies, and investor uncertainty would compound each other. Any individual act of spending or production, rather than jump-starting further economic activity, would run up against another bottleneck and fade to insignificance. The confidence boost would fail to materialize. Untangling this mess of problems is much harder than just getting people to go back out to dinner and the movies again, and could take years. Traditional demand-side stimulation from the Fed or from the fiscal side would not itself reverse the stagnation.

I don't think anyone knows which of these scenarios — or the intermediate possibilities — is most likely. That makes an appropriate macroeconomic countercyclical policy hard to design. From an economics standpoint, these are uncharted waters. That's the reason for reason to focus on solving the underlying public health problems as soon as possible.

Tyler Cowen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is a professor of economics at George Mason University and writes for the blog Marginal Revolution. His books include "Big Business: Love Letters to an American Antihero." This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Bloomberg LP and its owners.

The president can't 'fake news' this virus away

By DAVID VON DREHLE

The Washington Post

COVID-19 is unhappy news. Presidents never like unhappy news, especially during an election year. And Donald J. Trump is president. Therefore, President Trump does not like news of COVID-19.

Totally understandable. What's dangerous is the fact that Trump and his media antagonists have trained a significant number of Americans to view all news that the president doesn't like as manufactured, distorted or fake. The unhappy news of COVID-19 is none of those things, but if Trump supporters persist in believing so, the impact of this public health emergency will be amplified.

Why is COVID-19 a big deal? After all, it seems a lot like influenza — a nothing-burger for some, an unpleasant experience for many, and a deadly threat to the elderly and vulnerable. We live with flu, so why are people getting their knickers twisted over this? An epidemic of Trump Derangement Syndrome, perhaps?

No. COVID-19 is different from influenza because it is new. And any new stress on the health care infrastructure is a potential national emergency. You see, developed societies such as the United States have a certain number of doctors and nurses staffing a certain number of hospitals and clinics. These resources (whether allocated by a centralized government health service or by the wisdom of the marketplace) reflect expectations about the number and type of illnesses and injuries the society will face at any one time.

You don't have to trust me on this. Just look around your own neighborhood. You won't see many empty hospital beds, doctors and nurses and medical supplies, just

waiting for some new virus to emerge.

Actually, should you visit a hospital or clinic at this time of year, you will likely find the staff already quite busy treating — among other maladies — influenza. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, flu season places a large burden on the U.S. health care infrastructure: more than 10 million visits to health care providers in an average year and hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations. Flu season is to the health care industry what Mardi Gras is to the cheap plastic bead business.

With this in mind, imagine that you are a public health official and someone tells you there's another flu in town. You're maxed out treating the flu cases you already have. You will want to do everything in your power to make the outbreak as small as possible.

This unexpected strain on resources — no media hype — is what inspired China to take the extraordinary measures against COVID-19, even at a steep cost to the national economy. In Hubei province, the new virus swamped the existing health care system. Tens of thousands of hospital beds have been crammed into repurposed convention centers. Entire hospitals have been built overnight. Armies of doctors and nurses have been imported to fight the disease, while movement in or out of the province has otherwise been forbidden.

The same thing is happening in Italy. "In an effort to cope" with COVID-19, "Italy is graduating nurses early and calling medical workers out of retirement," reporter Loveday Morris wrote in The Washington Post. "Hospitals in the hardest-hit regions are delaying nonessential surgeries and scrambling to add 50% more intensive-care beds." This is the worst sce-

nario I've seen," said Angelo Pan, the head of the infectious-disease unit at the hospital in Cremona. "On Monday, that scenario moved the Italian government to take the astonishing step of shutting down the entire country."

Think about that for a moment. According to the World Health Organization, Italy had three confirmed COVID-19 cases three weeks ago. Yes, three — as in, the number of contestants on "Jeopardy!" Now the entire nation of some 60 million people is essentially quarantined, at an untold cost to the economy of a highly developed nation.

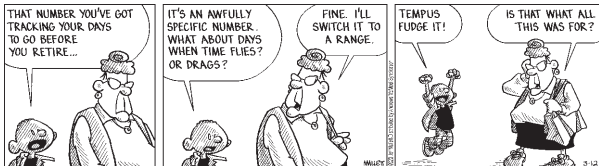
That kind of decision is not made in response to overheated media.

As Pan's remark suggests, a disease does not have to be the worst ever seen to produce a scenario that is the worst ever seen. It only needs to pose additional challenges on health care resources beyond the capacity of those resources. Suppose a city's hospitals have a total of 10 ventilators and suppose seven of them are in use, keeping victims of familiar flu and pneumonia alive. The eruption of a new disease that causes a mere four people to need a ventilator poses a crisis in additional cases. The crisis becomes unsustainable if similar outbreaks are happening in surrounding cities as well.

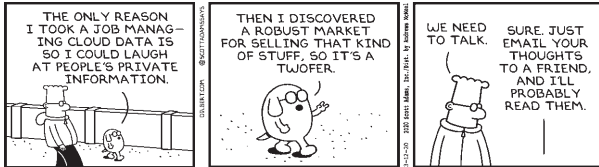
Unless Americans — young and old, healthy and vulnerable — take COVID-19 very seriously, it can spread here just as it has spread in China, to pose additional challenges on health care resources beyond the capacity of those resources. And if the president doesn't like today's news, he is really going to hate those headlines. The reporters who are trying to awaken the public are — in this case — the best friends he's got.

David Von Drehle is a Washington Post columnist. He is the author of "Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year."

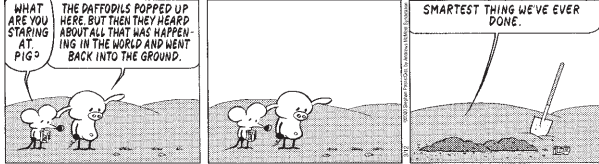
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



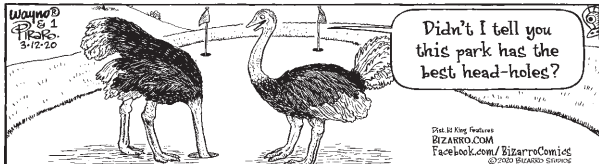
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19				20	21		
			22						23			
24	25	26			27	28	29			30	31	
32					33				34			
35			36	37					38			
			39						40	41		
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50	51			52			
53					54				55			
56					57				58			

ACROSS

- 1 Military conflicts
- 5 Game official
- 8 Conceal
- 12 "Be that — may ..."
- 13 Yale grad
- 14 Oklahoma city
- 15 Evening, in an ad
- 16 Journal
- 17 Ladder part
- 18 Garden pavilion
- 20 Mocher
- 22 Medico
- 23 Cover
- 24 Fall bloomers
- 27 Pub-going comic strip character
- 32 Sugary suffix
- 33 Dead heat
- 34 Darjeeling, e.g.
- 35 Frame for a mattress
- 38 School session
- 39 "As I see it," in a text
- 40 — Jima
- 42 Esoteric
- 45 Tabloid subjects
- 49 Bellow
- 50 By way of
- 52 Tend texts
- 53 Pooch
- 54 Busy insect
- 55 Arp's art
- 56 Fr. holy women

DOWN

- 25 Employ
- 26 Administer drugs to
- 28 Long of "Soul Food"
- 29 Name in someone's honor
- 30 Capita lead-in
- 31 Actress
- 36 Know-how
- 37 Heavy weight
- 38 Ohio city
- 41 You and I
- 42 Weaponry
- 43 Lopsided win
- 44 Author Hunter
- 46 Wax-coated cheese
- 47 Wait
- 48 Jazz great Getz
- 51 — jiffy

Answer to Previous Puzzle

EMUS	MUM	AMOR
MASH	ART	DIDO
MINI	GOLF	UNIT
ALARM		FELINE
	TAGS	ATM
JAMS	LIEV	ABC
ELI	LATTE	RED
TEN	IDEA	PTAS
	IDS	STAR
COBRAS	MOCKS	
BRAY	MINI	VANS
ECRU	URT	EVEN
RASP	GAB	SEWS

3-12

CRYPTOQUIP

UDPM DX QEPY G BF QIBKI
 UDEUYD ZPD ZYY UYZRBFH
 UEEY UDZK D MAYR
 XIPEAHIEAX XID GZR:
 KAD-XEUBZ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SOMEBODY'S LIFE IS FLOURISHING BUT HE MAKES VERY RASH DECISIONS, IS THAT RECKLESS THRIVING?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals W

NHL ROUNDUP

Bruins snap Flyers' win streak at 9

Boston is first in league to reach 100-point mark

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Matt Grzelczyk and Patrice Bergeron scored, Tuukka Rask stopped 36 shots and the Boston Bruins beat Philadelphia 2-0 on Tuesday night to snap the Flyers' nine-game winning streak.

The Bruins (44-14-12) became the first team with 100 points this season and Rask picked up his 50th career shutout. Rask became the sixth active goalie with at least 50 shutouts. He has five this season.

Rusk stymied a Flyers' offense that had scored at least three goals in each of their nine wins during the streak. They scored five goals four times since the streak started Feb. 18 against Columbus.

Philadelphia had been sensational as it shot up the standings and was fighting with Washington for first place in the Metropolitan Division. The Flyers had defeated Boston in a shootout in both games of the series this season, including a bizarre ending in January when the Bruins' Brad Marchand overshot the puck at center ice on a shootout attempt.

Philadelphia pounded Rask, taking 24 shots over the first two periods. Rask stood tall in net, stopping 36 total shots, and got the cushion he needed late when Bergeron's shot from the circle appeared to get deflected by a Flyers stick and went in for a 2-0 lead.

Ducks 5, Senators 2: Nicolas Deslauriers scored the fastest hat trick in team history. Ryan Miller made 40 saves and host Anaheim rolled past Ottawa.

Deslauriers completed a natural hat trick 11:49 into the game with a wrist shot from the left circle that went off Ottawa goaltender Marcus Hogberg's glove and shoulder to give the Ducks a 4-0 lead. It was his second goal in 32 seconds, after he scored on a one-timer from the slot. Deslauriers' first goal of the night came



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Flyers right wing Travis Konecny, left, passes the puck in front of Boston Bruins goaltender Tuukka Rask, who had 36 saves in a 2-0 win Tuesday in Philadelphia.

at 2:45. Jakob Silfverberg opened the scoring when he deflected Rickard Rakell's shot into the net on a power play.

It was Deslauriers' first hat trick in 375 NHL games. The left wing came into the game with four goals this season. Teemu Selanne held the previous Anaheim mark for quickest hat trick at 12:58 in 1997.

Penguins 5, Devils 2: Evgeni Malkin scored two goals and set up another to lead slumping Pittsburgh to a win at New Jersey.

Evan Rodrigues and defenseman Justin Schultz and Kris Letang also scored as the Penguins won for only the third time in 11 games. Matt Murray made 20 saves to help Pittsburgh reach 40 wins for the seventh straight season and 13th time since 2006-07. The only exception was the 48-game lockout-shortened season in 2012-13.

Nikita Gusev and Miles Wood scored for the Devils, who won their previous two games. Mackenzie Blackwood stopped 28 shots but last-place New Jersey

dropped to 6-3-2 in its last 11.

Maple Leafs 2, Lightning 1: Auston Matthews scored his 47th goal of the season and Frederik Andersen made 32 saves as host Toronto beat Tampa Bay.

William Nylander also scored for the Maple Leafs. Mitch Marner and John Tavares each had two assists for Toronto.

Ondrej Palat scored for the Lightning. Andrei Vasilevsky made 34 stops.

Predators 4, Canadiens 2: Filip Forsberg scored twice and Nashville withstood a late comeback try by host Montreal.

Ryan Johansen and Calle Jarnkrok also scored in the second period as the Predators built a 4-goal lead.

Artturi Lehkonen and Lukas Vejdemo had goals in the third period for the Canadiens, who lost their third straight game.

Hurricanes 5, Red Wings 2: Justin Williams scored a tie-breaking goal 1:38 into the final period, and Sebastian Aho added two goals later in the third to give Carolina a win at Detroit.

Morgan Geekie and Nino Niederreiter also scored for the Hurricanes, who extended their winning streak to three games.

Tyler Bertuzzi and Christoffer Ehn scored for the Red Wings, who had their modest two-game winning streak snapped.

Rangers 4, Stars 2: Mika Zibanejad scored his 10th goal in the season, impressive rookie Igor Shesterkin made 31 saves and New York won at Dallas.

Kaapo Kakko, another N Rangers rookie, scored twice in the second period for his first goals in a month. Adam Fox also had a goal as New York built a 4-0 cushion and won for the 10th time in their last 11 road games.

Canucks 5, Islanders 4 (SO): J.T. Miller scored the only goal in the shootout and host Vancouver beat New York.

Miller scored on a wrist shot from the faceoff circle. Tyler Toffoli had a goal and an assist for the Canucks, who won for the second time in seven games.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division												
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		GP	W	L	OT
Boston	70	44	14	12	100	227	174	Tampa Bay	70	43	21	6
Toronto	70	36	25	8	83	223	227	Florida	69	35	26	8
Montreal	71	31	31	7	71	212	222	Buffalo	69	30	31	8
Ottawa	70	25	33	12	62	189	240	Detroit	71	17	48	5
Metropolitan Division												
Washington	69	40	20	8	80	240	215	Philadelphia	69	41	21	7
Pittsburgh	69	40	23	6	86	224	196	Carolina	68	38	25	8
Columbus	70	33	22	15	81	180	187	N.Y. Islanders	68	35	23	10
N.Y. Rangers	69	37	28	4	78	232	219	New Jersey	69	28	29	12

Western Conference

Central Division															
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
St. Louis	70	41	19	10	92	221	91	Colorado	69	41	20	8	90	234	189
Dallas	69	37	24	8	82	188	177	Nashville	69	35	26	8	78	215	217
Nashville	70	36	28	6	78	212	201	Winnipeg	69	35	27	7	77	220	220
Chicago	69	31	39	8	70	206	216	Pacific Division							
Vegas	71	39	24	8	86	227	211	Edmonton	70	37	24	9	83	223	213
Calgary	70	36	27	7	79	210	215	Vancouver	69	36	27	6	67	212	215
Arizona	70	33	29	8	74	195	187	Anaheim	69	29	35	5	63	180	220
San Jose	69	29	35	5	63	180	220	Los Angeles	69	28	35	6	62	175	210

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to the playoffs.

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Monday's games
Buffalo 3, Washington 2, SO
Florida 2, St. Louis 1
Nashville 2, Arizona 2
Vegas 3, Edmonton 2, OT
Los Angeles 3, Colorado 1

Tuesday's games
Boston 2, Philadelphia 0
Pittsburgh 5, New Jersey 2
Toronto 2, Tampa Bay 1
Nashville 2, Montreal 2
Carolina 5, Detroit 2
N.Y. Rangers 4, Dallas 2
Anaheim 5, Ottawa 2
Vancouver 5, N.Y. Islanders 4, SO

Wednesday's games
San Jose at Chicago
Winnipeg at Edmonton
N.Y. Rangers at Colorado
St. Louis at Anaheim
Ottawa at Los Angeles

Thursday's games
Buffalo at Montreal
Carolina at New Jersey
Detroit at Washington
Nashville at Toronto
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay
Pittsburgh at Columbus
Vegas at Minnesota
N.Y. Islanders at Calgary
Vancouver at Arizona

Friday's games
Boston at Buffalo
San Jose at St. Louis
Ottawa at Chicago
N.Y. Islanders at Edmonton
Vancouver at Colorado

Scoring leaders

Philadelphia at Tampa Bay	
Pittsburgh at Columbus	
St. Louis at Minnesota	
Florida at Dallas	
N.Y. Islanders at Calgary	
Vancouver at Arizona	
Friday's games	
Boston at Buffalo	
San Jose at St. Louis	
Ottawa at Chicago	
N.Y. Islanders at Edmonton	
Vancouver at Colorado	

Scoring leaders	
Through Tuesday	
	GP G A PTS
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	70 43 67 110
Connor McDavid, EDM	69 33 63 96
David Pastrnak, BOS	69 33 63 96
Artemi Panarin, NYR	67 32 61 93
Nathan MacKinnon, COL	69 35 58 93
Brad Marchand, BOS	69 25 58 86
Nikita Kucherov, TB	67 33 51 84
Patrick Kane, CHI	69 31 52 82
Auston Matthews, TOR	69 46 33 79
Jonathan Huberdeau, FLA	68 23 58 78
Jack Eichel, BUF	69 36 42 78
John Carlson, WSH	69 16 60 75
Mark Scheifele, WPG	70 29 43 72
Michael B. (M.B.)	59 39 37 72
3 tied with 71 pts.	

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NBA

Roundup

Nets, Dinwiddie cool off Lakers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Spencer Dinwiddie scored 23 points and hit the tiebreaking jumper with 28.3 seconds to play, and the Brooklyn Nets beat the Los Angeles Lakers 104-102 Tuesday for their second straight win since interim coach Jacque Vaughn took over.

Anthony Davis missed a wide-open three-pointer at the buzzer that would have won it for the Lakers, whose four-game winning streak ended after an emotionally charged weekend. Los Angeles lost to a sub-.500 opponent in its first game after back-to-back victories over NBA-leading Milwaukee and the powerhouse Clippers.

Caris LeVert added 22 points as the Nets opened their four-game California road trip by knocking off the powerhouse Lakers, who lost for only the second time in 13 games.

"It feels good because it's a high-quality opponent on the road for a team that is doing its best right now to continue to find itself," Dinwiddie said.

Rockets 117, Timberwolves 111: James Harden scored 37 points and host Houston beat Minnesota, snapping a four-game skid.

The Rockets' losing streak, which matched a season high, came after they won six in a row and dropped them to sixth in the Western Conference with the playoffs fast approaching.

Russell Westbrook scored 27 points for Houston.

Spurs 119, Mavericks 109: LaMarcus Aldridge had 24 points in his return from injury and host San Antonio withstood Luka Dončić's 38 points to beat Dallas and keep its playoff hopes afloat.

The Spurs had seven players in double figures in snapping a three-game skid. Rudy Gay scored 17

points, Trey Lyles had 14 points and 11 rebounds and DeMar DeRozan added 13 points and 12 assists.

Doncic added seven rebounds and seven assists in 36 minutes.

Magic 120, Grizzlies 115: Terrence Ross scored 24 points, fueling a rally with 18 in the fourth quarter, and Orlando won at Memphis.

Michael Carter-Williams added 20 points and Nikola Vucevic finished with 19 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists for the Magic.

Trail Blazers 121, Suns 105: Damian Lillard scored 25 points and host Portland beat Phoenix.

The win snapped a two-game skid for the Blazers, who are among several teams vying to pull in front of Memphis for the eighth playoff spot in the West.

Clippers 131, Warriors 107: Kawhi Leonard scored 23 points before sitting out the entire fourth quarter along with the rest of the Doc Rivers' starters, and Los Angeles won at Golden State.

Paul George and Patrick Beverley scored 15 points apiece as the Clippers had seven players in double figures. Reggie Jackson added 16 points and JaMychal Green had 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Wizards 122, Knicks 115: Bradley Beal got back to his high-scoring ways with 40 points, lifting host Washington past New York.

Beal overcame a slow start and surpassed the 25-point plateau for the 22nd time in 23 games.

Bulls 108, Cavaliers 103: Coby White scored 20 points to help offset a career-high nine turnovers in his first NBA start, and host Chicago beat Cleveland.

Wendell Carter Jr. added 17 points. Lauri Markkanen, Denzel Valentine and Otto Porter Jr. each scored 15.



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie drives past the Lakers' Anthony Davis. Dinwiddie had 23 points, including a go-ahead jumper, in a 104-102 win Tuesday in Los Angeles.



AJ Mast/AP

Boston Celtics guard Marcus Smart, left, drives around Indiana Pacers forward Domantas Sabonis. Smart's bank shot gave his team the lead in the final minute of a 114-111 win Tuesday in Indianapolis.

Celtics recover, grab playoff spot

By CHRIS GOFF

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Marcus Smart's leaning bank shot in the final minute gave the Celtics the lead after the team blew a 19-point advantage and Boston then held on for a 114-111 victory Tuesday night over the Indiana Pacers to clinch a playoff spot for a sixth consecutive year.

Jayson Tatum scored 30 points for Boston, which snapped a 1-4 skid and is third in the Eastern Conference, while Gordon Hayward added 27 points, 10 boards and five assists in his home state.

Smart put the Celtics ahead for good at 111-109 with 40.7 seconds left by scoring in the lane over Domantas Sabonis, who led Indiana with 28 points, nine rebounds and eight assists.

Smart made two free throws with seven seconds to go for a three-point edge, and Justin Holiday missed badly on a contested three-pointer as time expired.

"Good win, and it couldn't have come at a better time with the week we've been having," Smart said. "We were really calm. You're going to have to learn to win games like this."

Victor Oladipo finished with a season-high 27 points to power a stunning comeback for the Pacers, who fell into an 85-66 hole late in the third quarter.

"We showed a lot of fight," said Oladipo, who only made his season debut Jan. 29 due to a major knee surgery. "It's been a minute since I've been in that position."

T.J. Warren, who finished with 22 points, hit a three-pointer from the left corner to complete Indiana's furious rally and tie the score at 104 with three minutes to play.

Sabonis' spin move and score on Daniel Theis pushed the Pacers in front 107-104, but struggling Boston proved up to the

challenge of recovering.

"We probably needed it," coach Brad Stevens said. "Go down three and find a way to win is probably a good thing for our team in the long run. That was hard."

The Celtics shot 44% from the field and did just enough from three-point range (13 makes) and the foul line (19-for-22 accuracy) to hold off the Pacers, who shot 50%.

"We have 18 games left after this," Stevens said. "It's hard to go to the playoffs. I didn't know (we clinched). We're far from a finished product, but we've got to start ascending soon, so it was important to go through a night like tonight."

Tip-ins

Boston: Hayward's pregame media availability occurred in an interview room adjacent to the home locker room. He and his teammates learned Tuesday morning about the NBA's closure of locker rooms to all nonessential personnel in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Indiana: Before the game, Holiday praised the Pacers' seventh-ranked defense for the team's 8-2 resurrection since last month's six-game losing streak.

"Defensively, we've been very, very good," Holiday said. "High energy. Guys have been helping one another. We're not healthy, but I think we're going to be just fine if we play the way we have been."

Stat Pack

Boston: Tatum added six rebounds and four steals. They had 20 points and six boards.

Indiana: Received two technical fouls (one on Warren, one on McMillan) for arguing with referees.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Toronto	46	18	.718	—
x-Boston	43	21	.672	3
Philadelphia	38	26	.594	8
Brooklyn	30	34	.469	16
New York	20	45	.308	26½

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	41	23	.641	—
Orlando	35	29	.545	1½
Washington	24	40	.375	17
Charlotte	22	42	.344	19
Atlanta	20	46	.303	22

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Milwaukee	39	26	.600	14
Indiana	22	43	.338	31
Chicago	20	45	.308	33
Cleveland	19	46	.292	34

Western Conference

Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	40	24	.625	—
Dallas	39	27	.591	2
Memphis	32	33	.492	8½
New Orleans	28	36	.438	12
San Antonio	20	46	.303	22½

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Denver	43	21	.672	—
Utah	41	23	.641	2
Oklahoma City	40	24	.625	3
Sacramento	29	37	.438	15
Minnesota	19	45	.297	24

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-L.A. Lakers	49	14	.778	—
L.A. Clippers	44	20	.688	5½
Phoenix	28	36	.438	21½
Golden State	26	39	.400	24
Portland	18	50	.261	35

Monday's games

Atlanta 142, Charlotte 125	115
Denver 109, Milwaukee 95	95
Toronto 101, Utah 92	92

Tuesday's games

Boston 114, Indiana 111	111
Washington 122, New York 115	115
Houston 117, Minnesota 111	111
Phoenix 108, Cleveland 103	103
San Antonio 119, Dallas 109	109
Orlando 120, Memphis 115	115
Portland 121, Phoenix 105	105
L.A. Clippers 131, Golden State 107	107
Brooklyn 104, L.A. Lakers 102	102

Wednesday's games

Charlotte at Miami	102
New York at Atlanta	102
Brooklyn at Golden State	102
Utah at Oklahoma City	102
New Orleans at Sacramento	102

Thursday's games

Chicago at Orlando	102
Boston at Milwaukee	102
Memphis at Portland	102
Brooklyn at Golden State	102
Houston at L.A. Lakers	102

Friday's games

Cleveland at Charlotte	102
Washington at Boston	102
Minnesota at Oklahoma City	102
New York at Miami	102
Denver at San Antonio	102
New Orleans at Utah	102
Brooklyn at L.A. Clippers	102

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Impact on US pro, college sports spreads

As Europe tightens restrictions, some basketball tournaments go on without fans, decisions lie ahead for pro leagues

BY JAKE SEINER
Associated Press

The novel coronavirus outbreak, which has already reshaped the professional sports landscape in Europe, prompted new restrictions to restrict fan access in the U.S. on Tuesday, with major decisions looming about baseball's opening day and college basketball's NCAA Tournament.

College games will be played without fans in Ohio and California, and with restrictions on large gatherings there and elsewhere, more disruptions to the sports calendar appear inevitable. The NCAA said it would "make decisions in the coming days" about its men's and women's basketball tournaments after two conferences banned fans from their championships and another canceled its tournament altogether.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee plans to ban gatherings and events of more than 250 people in virtually the entire Seattle area, a person familiar with the decision told The Associated Press on Tuesday night. The person was not authorized to disclose the decision and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Of the 29 known deaths in the U.S., 24 have been in the Seattle area, with 19 tied to a single nursing home.

None of North America's major sports leagues has postponed games or barred fans in a bid to keep them safe, but there was a flurry of activity as college conferences and schools began making those moves.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom questioned why leagues weren't moving more aggressively.

"I find it quite curious that the four major organizations — NHL, MLS, MLB and NBA — put out guidelines to protect their athletes but not their fans," said Newsom, a Democrat.

Discussions about next steps have been ongoing for weeks as postponements and fan restrictions have become common elsewhere.

The director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases told a congressional committee Wednesday that he would recommend the NBA not allow fans at games in response to the coronavirus.



MICHAEL SPINGLER/AP

Just two days after some fans wore face masks during a French League One soccer match, the French league said soccer matches in its top two divisions will be played without fans until April 15.

"I find it quite curious that the four major organizations — NHL, MLS, MLB and NBA — put out guidelines to protect their athletes but not their fans."

Gavin Newsom
California governor

grational committee Wednesday that he would recommend the NBA not allow fans at games in response to the coronavirus.

That answer by Dr. Anthony Fauci came hours before NBA owners are scheduled to meet to discuss the next steps in re-

sponding to the growing concern about the virus.

Early Wednesday, London-based football club Arsenal announced that its players would be self-isolating because of possible exposure to the virus, forcing

the postponement of its Premier League game at Manchester City. It was the first Premier League game called off because of the virus and the first possible exposure involving players in a major sports league.

Scores of top-tier soccer games in Spain, France and Portugal, as well as some in Germany and a European Championship qualifying match in Slovakia, will be played in empty stadiums in coming days.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks. Those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Sports and government officials have scrambled to address concerns fans could be at risk and to potentially stop the spread of the virus.

■ Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine recommended that fans be kept away from all indoor sporting events. The state is home to the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers and the NHL's Columbus Blue Jackets, among others; the Blue Jackets said they did not plan to keep fans away from games this week. The state is also hosting a number of collegiate tournaments this month.

■ The NHL was also assessing the impact of a decision by Santa Clara County health officials in California to ban gatherings of more than 1,000 people in response to the spread of the virus. The San Jose Sharks have games scheduled for March 19, 21 and 29.

■ The NBA told teams last week to prepare for the possibility of playing games in empty arenas, which Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James initially said he wanted no part of and would not play, but said Tuesday he would do whatever the NBA tells teams to do.

■ One of the year's biggest tennis tournaments, at Indian Wells in California, was canceled.

Source: MLB prefers teams switch sites if parks shuttered

BY RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — If Major League Baseball can't play in front of fans at a team's home ballpark because of the virus outbreak, the league's first preference likely would be to switch games to the visiting team's stadium if possible, a person familiar with the deliberations told The Associated Press.

MLB starts its season on March 26. Among the games on opening day is Texas at Seattle — the Seattle area has been hit hard by the virus, with 24 deaths.

MLB anticipates government officials will decide whether it is safe to play in front of fans in each city. If changes to the schedule are necessary, MLB would make determinations at the point when a ballpark has been ruled out.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee had scheduled a news conference

Wednesday where he planned to ban gatherings and events of more than 250 people in virtually the entire Seattle area, a person familiar with the decision told The Associated Press on Tuesday night. The Mariners and MLB had no immediate comment.

"I hope it doesn't turn into us missing games or pushing scheduled games back," Baltimore Orioles first baseman Chris Davis said.

Baseball's preference is to play in front of fans and not in empty stadiums, the person familiar with the deliberations said. Players and management don't like the lack of energy in empty ballparks.

"It wouldn't be the same. It really wouldn't," said Dave Martinez, manager of World Series champion Washington Nationals.

"While MLB recognizes the fluidity of this rapidly evolving situation, our current intention is

to play Spring Training and regular season games as scheduled," MLB said in a statement.

Flipping home and road dates is easier to do at the start of the season, when there are many series between teams who face each other later in the year.

The Rangers are scheduled to open Globe Life Field, their new retractable roof ballpark, against the Los Angeles Angels on March 31. Texas general manager Jon Daniels said Monday there hadn't been any discussion with MLB or the Mariners about swapping home dates for that opening series between AL West rivals, but said the new ballpark would be ready if it is needed.

Rangers catcher Robinson Chirinos said Tuesday he is "a little bit" concerned about traveling to face the Mariners.

"I know the season starts in Seattle, and we know how Seattle is right now," Chirinos said.



SMILEY N. POOL/Dallas Morning News

Texas Rangers catcher Robinson Chirinos said Tuesday he was concerned about having to travel to Seattle for the Rangers' season-opening series with the Mariners.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

MAC, Big West will play tournaments without fans

By RALPH D. RUSSO

Associated Press

Two Division I conferences announced Tuesday they will restrict fan access to their postseason games because of concerns about the spread of the coronavirus.

That followed the Ivy League's decision to cancel its men's and women's basketball tournaments that were scheduled to be played Friday through Sunday at Lavietes Pavilion in Cambridge.

The Mid-American Conference said it was implementing a restricted attendance policy at its men's and women's basketball tournaments in Cleveland this week. That announcement came on the heels of Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine recommending that all indoor sporting events in the state be played without spectators on site.

The Big West said its men's and women's basketball tournaments in Southern Cali-

fornia will be played without spectators. Most of those games will be played at the Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif.

The Ivy tournaments are the first at the Division I basketball level to be canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak.

For most people, coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus.

Conference tournaments have been going on all over the country since last week at venues big and small. Most of the biggest conferences, such as the Big Ten and Southeastern Conference, begin their men's tournaments this week at large arenas in major cities.

The NCAA men's and women's Division I tournaments begin next week. The NCAA responded quickly to the Ivy League's announcement, saying it planned to play its games at the scheduled sites with no adjust-

ments to fan access, but is monitoring the situation.

"NCAA member schools and conferences make their own decisions regarding regular season and conference tournament play," NCAA president Mark Emmert said Tuesday in a statement. "As we have stated, we will make decisions on our events based on the best, most current public health guidance available."

A few hours later, DeWine announced his recommendation for all high school, college and professional teams in Ohio to play without spectators in attendance, and the NCAA released another brief, less definitive statement.

"We are consulting with public health officials and our COVID-19 advisory panel, who are leading experts in epidemiology and public health, and will make decisions in the coming days," the NCAA said.

The first four games of the NCAA men's

tournament are scheduled to be played in Dayton, Ohio, and first- and second-round games are scheduled for Cleveland on March 20 and 22.

CBS and Turner Sports held a conference call Tuesday for reporters to discuss the NCAA men's tournament with network executives.

CBS Sports chairman Sean McManus and Jeff Zucker, chairman of WarnerMedia News and Sports, said the NCAA is in constant contact with its television partners. They said decisions regarding whether to postpone or cancel games or limit fan access to venues will be made solely by the NCAA.

"Obviously, it would be a different atmosphere and we wouldn't be focusing as we often do on the excitement of the fans," McManus said. "The basketball game is still going to be produced as it would if there are fans in the stands."



JOHN LOCHNER/AP

Gonzaga's Drew Timme, left, and Saint Mary's Kristers Zorkis battle for the ball Tuesday during the West Coast Conference final.

Title: Gonzaga pulls away after halftime adjustments

FROM BACK PAGE

the first half, Filip Petrushev had a double-double and No. 2 Gonzaga beat Saint Mary's 84-66 to reclaim the West Coast Conference tournament title Tuesday night.

"It wasn't always easy, but we adapted at halftime," said Gonzaga's Joel Ayayi. "We came out with an edge and that was the difference in the game."

The top-seeded Zags (31-2) recovered from a middling performance in the semifinals to win their eighth WCC tournament title in 10 years and 17th overall.

Playing in its 23rd straight WCC title game, Gonzaga raced away from the Gaels in a dominating second half.

"They're really big inside. That's their strength," Saint Mary's coach Randy Bennett said. "It's a little bit of a problem for us because we don't have the size. They kept bringing it down in the post and that was the story of the game, why they beat us."

Ayayi scored 17 points and Petrushev finished with 10 points and 14 rebounds to help the Zags outscore Saint Mary's 48-22 in the paint.

They won't play again until the

Saint Mary's (26-8) upset Gonzaga in last year's title game to earn the WCC's automatic NCAA Tournament bid and kept pace with the Zags in an entertaining first half this time.

Jordan Ford and Malik Pitts combined to score Saint Mary's first 34 points to keep things tight, but Gonzaga tightened up defensively in the second half to pull away.

Ford finished with 27 points and Pitts 17 for the Gaels, who should be in decent shape to make the NCAA Tournament despite the loss.

"We needed to get the ball out of Jordan Ford's hands," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. "He's an unbelievable player and when he gets going like that and Pitts is making those deep threes, we had to change the dynamic a little bit."

The Zags and Gaels eked their way into their 11th title game meeting.

Gonzaga struggled putting away San Francisco 81-77 in the semis while Saint Mary's advanced with a 51-50 victory over No. 14 BYU on Ford's last-second shot.

Scoreboard

Non-Conference tournaments

America East Conference

Tuesday, March 10

Hartford 66, Stony Brook 58

Saturday, March 14

Hartford at Vermont

American Athletic Conference

At Fort Worth, Texas

First Round

Thursday, March 12

South Florida vs. UCF

UConn vs. Tulane

SMU vs. Temple

Memphis vs. East Carolina

Quarterfinals

Friday, March 13

Cincinnati vs. 2. Florida-UCF winner

Wichita St. vs. UConn-Tulane winner

Houston vs. SMU-Temple winner

Tulsa vs. Memphis-E. Carolina winner

Atlantic Coast Conference

At Greensboro, N.C.

First Round

Tuesday, March 10

Pittsburgh 81, Wake Forest 72

North Carolina 78, Virginia Tech 56

Second Round

Wednesday, March 11

Clemson vs. Miami

NC State vs. Wake Forest

Notre Dame vs. Boston College

Syracuse vs. North Carolina

Quarterfinals

Thursday, March 12

Florida St. vs. Clemson-Miami winner

Duke vs. NC State-Wake Forest

Virginia vs. Boston College winner

Louisville vs. Syracuse-N. Carolina

winner

Atlantic Sun Conference

Championship

Liberty 73, Lipscomb 57

Atlantic 10 Conference

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

George Mason vs. Saint Joseph's

George Washington vs. Fordham

Second Round

Thursday, March 12

UMass vs. VCU

St. Bonaventure vs. George Mason

Southern Utah vs. Idaho

Davidson vs. La Salle

George Washington vs. Fordham winner

Quarterfinals

Friday, March 13

Dayton vs. UMass-VCU winner

Villanova vs. Xavier-DePaul winner

George Mason-Saint Joseph's winner

Rhode Island vs. Duquesne-George Washington-Fordham winner

Big East Conference

At New York

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Georgetown vs. St. John's

Xavier vs. DePaul

Mid-American Conference

Thursday, March 12

Creighton vs. Georgetown-St. John's winner

Providence vs. Butler

Villanova vs. Xavier-DePaul winner

Seton Hall vs. Marquette

Big Sky Conference

At Boise, Idaho

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Weber State vs. Sacramento State

Southern Utah vs. Idaho State

Thursday, March 12

E. Washington vs. Sacramento State

Portland State vs. Montana State

N. Colorado vs. S. Utah-Idaho winner

Montana vs. N. Ariz.-Idaho St. winner

Big South Conference

Championship

Winthrop 76, Hampton 68

Big Ten Conference

At Indianapolis

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Minnesota vs. Northwestern

Indiana vs. Nebraska

Second Round

Thursday, March 12

Rutgers vs. Michigan

Iowa vs. Minn.-Northwestern winner

Ohio State vs. Purdue

Penn St. vs. Indiana-Nebraska winner

Quarterfinals

Friday, March 13

Wisconsin vs. Rutgers-Mich. winner

Illinois vs. Iowa-Minnesota-Northwestern winner

Michigan St. vs. Ohio St.-Purdue winner

Maryland vs. Penn State-Indiana-Nebraska winner

Big 12 Conference

At Kansas City, Mo.

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Oklahoma State vs. Iowa State

TCU vs. Kansas State

First Round

Tuesday, March 12

Texas vs. Texas Tech

Kansas vs. Okla. St.-Iowa St. winner

Baylor vs. TCU-Kansas State winner

Oklahoma vs. West Virginia

Big West Conference

At Anaheim, Calif.

First Round

Thursday, March 12

UC Irvine vs. Long Beach State

SC Northridge vs. Cal State Fullerton

UC Santa Barbara vs. UC Riverside

Hawaii vs. UC Davis

Colonial Athletic Association

Championship

Hofstra 70, Northeastern 61

Conference USA

At Frisco, Texas

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Old Dominion vs. Florida Atlantic

FIU vs. Rice

UAB vs. UGA

Marshall vs. UTEP

Quarterfinals

Thursday, March 12

N. Texas vs. Old Dominion-Fall winner

Charlotte vs. FIU-Rice winner

W. Kentucky vs. UAB-UTS winner

La Tech vs. Marshall-Louisiana

Horizon League

Championship

Northern Kentucky 71, Ill.-Chicago 62

Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference

At Atlantic City, N.J.

First Round

Tuesday, March 10

Manhattan 61, Fairfield 43

Iona 70, Connecticut 69

Niagara 56, Marist 54

Wednesday, March 11

Siena vs. Manhattan

Peter's vs. Miami

Thursday, March 12

Rider vs. Niagara

Monmouth vs. Quinnipiac

Mid-American Conference

At Cleveland

Quarterfinals

Thursday, March 12

Akron vs. Ohio

N. Illinois vs. Miami

Bowling Green vs. Toledo

Kent State vs. Kent State

Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference

At Norfolk, Va.

First Round

Tuesday, March 10

Delaware State 68, Md. East Shore 64

Howard 70, South Carolina State 63

Wednesday, March 11

N. Carolina Central vs. Delaware State

North Carolina A&T vs. Howard

Bethune-Cookman vs. North Carolina State

Norfolk St. vs. SC St.-Howard winner

Mississippi Valley Conference

Championship

Bradley 80, Valparaiso 68

Mountain West Conference

Championship

Utah State 59, San Diego State 56

Northwest Conference

Championship

Robert Morris 77, Saint Francis (Pa.) 67

Ohio Valley Conference

Championship

Belmont 76, Morehead State 75

Pacific-12 Conference

At Las Vegas

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Oregon State vs. Utah

Arizona vs. Washington

Stanford vs. California

Colorado vs. Washington State

Quarterfinals

Thursday, March 12

Oregon vs. Oregon State-Utah winner

Southern Cal vs. Arizona-Washington winner

Stanford-California winner

Arizona St. vs. Colo.-Wash. St. winner

South Carolina vs. Arkansas-Vanderbilt winner

Southeastern Conference

At Nashville, Tenn.

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Mississippi vs. Georgia

Arkansas vs. Vanderbilt

Second Round

Thursday, March 12

Tennessee vs. Alabama

Florida vs. Miss.-Georgia winner

Texas A&M vs. Missouri

South Carolina vs. Arkansas-Vanderbilt winner

Quarterfinals

Friday, March 13

Kentucky vs. Tennessee-Alabama winner

Mississippi State vs. Florida-Mississippi winner

Auburn vs. Texas A&M-Missouri winner

LSU vs. South Carolina-Arkansas-Vanderbilt winner

Southern Conference

Championship

ETSU 72, W. Georgia 67

Southland Conference

At Katy, Texas

First Round

Wednesday, March 11

Northwestern State vs. A&M CC

Lamar vs. McNeese State

Second Round

Thursday, March 12

Sam Houston State vs. Northwestern State-A&M CC winner

Corpus Christi winner

Nicholls State vs. Lamar-McNeese State winner

Southwestern Athletic Conference

First Round

Wednesday, March 10

Prairie View vs. Georgia State

Southern (NO) 67, Alabama 53

Texas Southern 75, Grambling St. 62

Jackson St. 69, Alcorn St. 65

Semifinals

Friday, March 13

Prairie View vs. Jackson State

Southern (NO) vs. Georgia Southern

Summit League

Championship

North Dakota St. vs. North Dakota 53

COLLEGE BASKETBALL



Nick Wass/AP

Hofstra guard Eli Pemberton right, is defended by Northeastern guard Shaquille Walters during the Pride's 70-61 win Tuesday in the championship of the Colonial Athletic Association tournament.

Take Pride: Hofstra back in NCAA tourney, 19 years later

By DANIEL KUCIN JR.
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Eli Pemberton dreamed since he was 6 years old about playing in the NCAA Tournament.

He'll get to live that dream after helping end the Hofstra Pride's long drought without an appearance.

Pemberton scored 12 of his 19 points in the second half and Hofstra came from behind to beat Northeastern 70-61 Tuesday night to win the Colonial Athletic Association Tournament and return to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2001.

"I knew that I always wanted to be there, and I'm glad that I'm going to be there with my brothers," Pemberton said.

The top-seeded Pride (26-8) clinched the CAA's automatic bid and reached the NCAA Tournament for the fifth time in program history. It's Hofstra's first CAA title.

Coach Joe Mihalich is back in the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2007, when he was at Niagara. Players sprayed Mihalich with water on stage after receiving the CAA trophy.

Hofstra avenged a 2019 CAA title-game loss to the Huskies.

"It is something to be proud of because we beat a bunch of champions," Mihalich said. "The championship goes through them. They are the defending champions, so to win the championship, you've got to knock out the champ."

Senior Desure Buie scored a game-high 20 points and was named the tournament's most outstanding player. Jalen Ray scored 17 points, and Isaac Kante grabbed 15 rebounds.

"My teammates were telling me to get the ball and make something happen," Buie said. "That is what came from my coaches and teammates believing in me, and that is just what I did."

'It is something to be proud of because we beat a bunch of champions.'

Joe Mihalich

Hofstra basketball coach

The Pride trailed at halftime and used a 17-4 run to pull away. Hofstra held conference leading scorer Jordan Roland to just 11 points.

Maxime Boursiquot led Northeastern with 15 points and nine rebounds.

The Pride were nearly unstoppable during tournament play and delivered an 18-point drubbing of Drexel in the quarterfinals. They scored another double-digit victory against Delaware in the semifinals.

Big picture

Northeastern: The Huskies ran out of gas, and their Cinderella run at the CAA Tournament ended with a thud. Northeastern (17-16) upset third-seeded Towson and then beat Elon to reach the tournament championship game.

Hofstra: The Pride are expected to be a No. 13 or 14 seed in the NCAA Tournament and a big underdog in the first round. But the celebration is on in Hempstead, N.Y., because it has been so long since Hofstra made it.

"Growing up, that is always what I wanted to do, sitting at the TV and watching those games," Buie said about advancing to the NCAA Tournament. "You dream of this as a kid. Kemba Walker was my role model, so I used to run home to see him and I just wanted to be a part of something special. I wouldn't trade these guys for the world."

Conference championships

Northern Kentucky wins Horizon tourney for 3rd time in 4 years

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Jalen Tate tied one piece of the net to his championship hat Tuesday and hung the rest around his neck after earning another NCAA Tournament bid.

They will be the newest additions to the family's trophy case — and he hopes not the last.

On Tuesday, Tate scored all of his 14 points in the first half, spent the second half doing the dirty work on defense while leading Northern Kentucky past the University of Illinois at Chicago 71-62 for its second straight Horizon League Tournament title.

"It feels good to be back in the (NCAA) tournament, man, and with these guys it feels great," he told the crowd moments after being named the tourney MVP. "And we're not done, either."

The Norse (23-9) have now made the 68-team field for the third time in four years.

For Tate, this victory helps him pull even with his father, Jermaine, and his older brother, JoeSean, with two NCAA appearances each. His brother and father both played at Ohio State though his dad eventually transferred to Cincinnati.

Jalen Tate wound up picking the smaller school across the Ohio River, where he has thrived.

In fact, winning the MVP Award and this year's conference defensive player of the year award might even give the redshirt junior family bragging rights.

"I don't think I'll get too far into it, looking back," he said, referring to the family competition. "But getting beaten up, bloodied, upset when I couldn't get my shot off at seven or eight or nine, really prepared me for this. I don't back down from any challenge. It put the toughness in me that I have today."

Tate made that perfectly clear in Indianapolis, with his father watching every move.

Yes, Tate needed help in the second half as he battled foul trouble and he got it from a reliable source — Tyler Sharpe, who scored 12 of his 16 points in the second half.

But when second-seeded Northern Kentucky needed a defensive stopper after the Flames trimmed a 15-point deficit to 42-38 with 14:03 to play, Tate came through. He played a key role in forcing UIC (18-17) to miss eight consecutive shots and commit three turnovers over the next seven minutes. That gave the Norse just enough time to score 11 straight points and rebuild a 53-40 lead. The fourth-seeded Flames never recovered.

Northeast

Robert Morris 77, Saint Francis 67. Colonias guard Daniel Treacy was an unknown entity

entering the 2019-20 season, and under the radar sophomore who was just looking to take a small step forward after a rough freshman campaign.

Instead, he took a giant leap — one that landed him and Robert Morris right into the NCAA Tournament.

Led by Treacy, the host Colonias used a second half surge to defeat the league-rival Red Flash in the Northeast Conference Tournament championship.

With the victory, Robert Morris qualified for the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2015.

"They're one of the toughest teams I've ever coached mentally," said Colonias coach Andy Toole. "Guys were locked in each and every day. As the season went on, they raised their level every time they were challenged. ... The thing I would say about these guys is it's as competitive a group from top to bottom as we've coached. I think when you have a competitiveness and a toughness that they have, you're willing to do so much more."

Treacy, who earned tournament MVP honors, was a key component of that toughness. After missing his first three shots, he finished with 18 points shooting 72% from the field (8-for-11), connecting on two of his four three-point attempts and dishing five assists.

Summit

North Dakota St. 89, North Dakota 53: For the fifth time in school history, the top-seeded Bison are headed to the NCAA Tournament, and this time it was never in doubt.

North Dakota State led from start to finish in the Summit League Tournament championship game and secured the automatic tournament bid.

NDSU's leading scorer, Vinnie Shahid, led the Bison with 25 points on 8-for-14 shooting. Shahid entered the game averaging 19.2 points per game, but he blew by that early in the second half. Tyson Ward scored 15 of his 23 points in the second half for NDSU. He finished with a double-double, grabbing a game-high 13 rebounds.

"It's contagious. We had confidence in each other," Shahid said. "When one guy sees the ball go in, it boosts the confidence for everybody."

The Bison (25-8) raced to a 13-0 lead and the Fighting Hawks were down 21-2 in the first eight minutes of the game. North Dakota State continued to pour it on in the first half, building the lead to as many as 27 points at the break.

DeSean Allen-Likens led North Dakota (15-18) with 17 points.

SPORTS



Streak ends
After winning nine straight,
Flyers fall to Bruins » **NHL, Page 19**



COLLEGE BASKETBALL



Joel Ayayi, most outstanding player of the West Coast Conference tournament, cuts a piece of the net after Gonzaga's 84-66 win over Saint Mary's in the final Tuesday in Las Vegas.

PHOTOS BY JOHN LOCHER / AP

Zags reclaim title

Gonzaga turns tables on rival in WCC final

BY JOHN MARSHALL
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Gonzaga stumbled in last year's West Coast Conference tournament, losing to rival Saint Mary's in the title game after dominating the regular season.

The Zags won another regular-season title this year with a new group of players and

again found themselves in a championship-game fight with the Gaels.

Instead of buckling under the pressure, Gonzaga pushed back with a dominating second half to reclaim the title and, potentially, a No. 1 NCAA Tournament seed.

Drew Timme scored 15 of his 17 points in
SEE TITLE ON PAGE 22

Gonzaga's
Corey Kispert

Inside: Hofstra earns first berth in NCAA Tournament since 2001, Page 23

MLB prefers switching sites to no fans

Virus outbreak, Page 21

Celtics clinch sixth straight playoff berth

NBA, Page 20



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